

From the Black Sea to Transoxiana: Vatatzis' narration of the peoples of Central Asia (first half of 18th c.)

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Fani Partsafyllidou

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Supervisor: Acad. Associate Stefanos Kordosis

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I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work and has not been submitted before to any institution for assessment purposes. I have acknowledged all sources used and have cited these in the reference section.

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Abstract

Vasileios Vatatzis was a Greek merchant who lived in the first half of 18th century. Through his travels his life became intertwined with Russian and Persian politics when he undertook a diplomatic mission. Eventually, Vatatzis secured an important position in Nader Shah's court. His political understanding combined with his cosmopolitan life offered him a unique view on Central Asian matters. In *Voyages* Vatatzis describes peoples of Central Asia while making ethnographic remarks. Here *Voyages* is used as a primary historical source to extract information about nomadic peoples, which are then contextualized in the broad spectrum of Eurasian history. This dissertation was written as part of the MSc in Black Sea & Eastern Mediterranean at the International Hellenic University.

Voyages is compared in this dissertation with secondary sources and traces where *Voyages* confirms, elaborates, or contradicts the existing historiography. The subsequent aim of this dissertation is to facilitate the understanding of *Voyages* content today. The

work is unfortunately not yet available in English. Here, the passages with the most significant historical importance have been selected and translated from Greek to English. Furthermore, this dissertation contextualizes Voyages and explains the historical realities that are mentioned in the book. This work is accompanied by a line-to-line translation, for an in-depth look where needed, maps that follow Vatatzis' travels, and an Index of 50 names of modern cities with their counterpart in Modern Greek.

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Introduction

The themes of Asian history are rich in contrasts, religion pluralism, and lifestyle diversity, yet they remain quite unknown in Western academia. It is apparent that Eurasian studies will increase their role in universities in the decades to come, since the intercultural communication has always been fostered by the mutual benefit of trade relations. But even despite this factor, the Asian history deserves a spotlight on its own.

It is my honor to unveil a glimpse of Eurasian history, the nomadic peoples of Central Asia as seen with the eyes of a Greek merchant who travelled there. The aim of this dissertation is to explore *Voyages*, a piece of travel literature, as a primary historical source for the nomadic peoples of Central Asia. This can be an important contribution to historiography since nomadic cultures are intrinsically underrepresented. Writing, the foundation of history, was less practiced in nomadic cultures, and in some instances where they did write their own history it was eradicated by external powers.

Every primary source about nomadic peoples is valuable, let alone the peculiarity of a Greek one, which includes ethnographic remarks about everyday life. Greek travel literature is scarce as well, and rarely deals with such remote lands. Therefore, this source combines two rare themes.

The first chapter explores the life of Vasileios Vatatzis in great length, using his work *Voyages* as its primary historical source. It attempts to gather the events in chronological order and to date these events approximately. The second chapter presents the complete works of Vasileios Vatatzis, devoting one subchapter for each known work: *Voyages*, *The Map of Central Asia*, and *Persica*. It divides the information into four units for each respective work: description of contents, publication, influence, and the preserved manuscripts.

Two transitional chapters shift the focus point from the author to the subject of his studies. The third chapter of this dissertation analyses the content of *Voyages* altogether, as a solid unit, and examines the purposes of the author, Vasileios Vatatzis, behind writing it. The fourth chapter introduces the politics of Central Asia when Vatatzis observed part of the region, in the first half of 18th century. The process of the territorial expansion of three empires is described, namely the Qing empire, the Russian empire, and the Persian empire. The results of this process concerning the nomadic Mongol populations of the region are highlighted.

The fifth and sixth chapters narrate the history of a selection of nomadic populations which are mentioned by Vatatzis. The most important parts of the main primary source, *Voyages*, concerning these nations are translated in this dissertation from Greek to English. The dissertation is accompanied by an Index with translation of city names from early modern Greek of 18th century to modern English.

Vasileios Vatatzis

This chapter focuses on the author of the *Voyages*, Vasileios Vatatzis. It is divided into two sub-chapters, the life of the author, which is limited to his life events, and his identity, which has a broad approach. Prior to these sub-chapters the chapter on methodology is presented, where it is explained how the information was collected, which sources are available and whether they suffice.

Methodology

Understanding the author of a primary historical source is crucial in order to prove the legitimacy of the source and to understand his point of view. Shedding life into Vatatzis' life is not easy given the dearth of sources, so a great deal of effort was made to extract information about his life from his own work.

Sources on Vatatzis life

The main source on Vatatzis life is the *Voyages* itself, due to its autobiographical elements. There are almost no other sources about Vasileios Vatatzis¹. There are only two pieces of information that are given in external sources, which are exceptions. Daniil Filippidis who wrote in the beginning of 19th century mentioned that Vatatzis spoke Arabic, Persian, Latin, and ‘many European languages’². Also, Nicolae Iorga’s research proves a connection between Vatatzis’ family and Russia. Whether this connection came up as a reason or as a result of Vatatzis’ travels in Russia remains unknown³.

To what extend is Vatatzis’ life known?

Do the sources suffice to illustrate Vatatzis’ life? Probably not. Although the *Voyages* implies what was taking place in the authors life for a big period, a great part of the authors’ life is omitted. There are six events in his life that are dated with some certainty; the rest are defined with a relative dating which is uncertain. Meanwhile, we have no clue about the authors’ activities in his middle age. In the *Voyages* he shared details about his life until he was 39 years old, in 1733 and there is no source to indicate what happened next. Essentially, Vatatzis biography is limited to his youth.

Absolute dating

To ease the reading of Vasileios Vatatzis life, the six events of his life that are safely dated are written here beforehand. These events are dated by the author himself and will be used to pinpoint chronologically the rest of his life too.

Table 1. Six exact dates in Vasileios Vatatzis biography

1694	Vatatzis is born in Istanbul.
1708	He starts his travel to Moscow.
1716	Vatatzis visits Iran.

1 Marinos Sariyannis, “An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek’s Travel Account in Central Asia,” (paper presented at CIEPO Interim Symposium: The Central Asiatic Roots of Ottoman Culture, Istanbul, 2014), 48

2 Δανιήλ Φιλίππιδης, *Γεωγραφικόν της Ρουμουνίας ες ακριβεστέραν και πληρεστέραν κατάληψιν της ιστορίας αυτής, Νυν πρώτον συντεθέν και τύποις εκδοθέν εν Λειψία της Σαξονίας εν τη Τυπογραφία του Ταουχνίτζ* (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1816), 267 ; Sariyannis 48

3 Sariyannis, “An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek’s Travel Account in Central Asia,” 48

1720	Vatatzis returns to Istanbul.
1727	Vatatzis travels to Moscow and starts his journey.
1732	Vatatzis offers the <i>Map of Central Asia</i> to Oxford University.

Biography of Vasileios Vatatzis

Relative dating

The life of Vasileios Vatatzis will be analysed here, as it is narrated in the *Voyages*, either in a direct or in an indirect way. The dates mentioned in this section are approximate, which will be clearly stated.

1708-1711 First departure from Istanbul in 1708

In 1694 Vasileios Vatatzis was born in Tarabya, a district of Constantinople. His father was a Christian Orthodox priest who subsequently served as a grand steward in Aya Sophia church⁴. In 1708 Vatatzis migrated to work as a merchant⁵; he was only fourteen years old at the time. His destination was Moscow, but he did not get there directly.

First, he stayed to Iași.⁶ Moving on, probably on the same year, 1708, he stays for 6 months in Nizhyn.⁷ (*Νίζνα*) to learn and practice trade. During this half-year period Vatatzis explored the region and while staying in Nizhyn he travelled to 12 neighboring cities⁸. Some of them were Pryluky (*Πρελούκα*), Chernihiv (*Τσερνίοβο*), Borzna (*Μποροζονού*), Baturyn (*Μπατούρνα*), Sosnytsya (*Σόσνιτζα*), Pereiaslav (*Περίάσλοβο*), Berezna (*Μπερέζνα*), and Glushkovo (*Γλούχοβο*). Then it is time for him to move on to Moscow, his scheduled destination. Departing from Nizhyn, his itinerary includes Sevsk (*Σεύκα*), Bolkhov (*Πόλχοβο*), Belyon (*Μπιλιόβα*), Kaluga (*Καλούχα*).⁹ Please see Map 1 in Appendix III.

4 Evangelos Venetis, "Vatatzis, Vasilios" in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition (January 1, 2000), available at [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#) : Vasileios Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*. Βασιλείου Βατάτζη περιηγητικών. Publie par Émile Legrand (Ανάτυπον εκ των «Nouveaux Melanges Orientaux» Paris 1886) (Αθήναι: Βιβλιοπωλείον Νότη Καραβία, 1972), I/10

5 Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, I/36

6 Idem, I/46

7 Idem I/77

8 Ibid.

9 Idem p. 229-230

Around 1709-1711 Vatatzis lived in Moscow. He stayed there for three years to pursue trade.¹⁰ After feeling homesick, he returned to Constantinople using a short route with detours. His itinerary was Moscow (*Μοσχοβία*) – Kiev (*Κιοβία*) - Kamianets Podilskyi (*Καμενίτζα*) - Bucharest-Veliko Tarnovo (*Τύρνοβο*) -Istanbul. He enjoyed time with his family, but he left Istanbul ‘immediately’ (*εὐθύς*),¹¹ which clearly means fast. Therefore, his second departure from Istanbul should probably be dated either at the end of 1711 or at the start of 1712. Please see Map 2 in Appendix III.

Second departure from Istanbul in 1712

Vatatzies goes through Târgoviște (*Τριγόβιστο*) in Transylvania (*Ερδελία*) and stays in Brasov, Romania for a while because he has a business company there.¹² It was in his intention to travel to Poland and when he found company they went there together.¹³ He starts his journey to Poland around 1712. On his way he visited Făgăraș (*Φαγαράσι*) and Bistrița (*Μπίστριτζα*).

In 1712 Vatatzis explores Poland while he is based in Lviv (*Λιόβι*). Lviv is a city located in western Ukraine, but at the time it was part of Poland. He visited Lublin (*Λιουμπλιούνι*), a Polish city then and now, and Warsaw. Please see Map 3 in Appendix III.

Several lines in the text show that as long Vatatzis lived in Poland he was focused on trade without having any other professional activity on the side. Lines I/217 and I/243 go as follows:

‘renowned merchants are working there [in Lviv]’

‘I traveled there [to Warsaw] for trade’

Once again, he travels to Moscow, from Lviv through Kiev. Please see Map 4 in Appendix III.

While in Moscow, he was contemplating on his next steps.¹⁴ He made the decision to go to Asia, but there is no explaining as to what led him to this decision. It is vaguely

10 Idem I/124-125 ; Στέφανος Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία. Οι περιηγήσεις των Νικολάου Σπαθάρη, Βασιλείου Βατάτζη, Παναγιώτη Ποταγού και το «Μεγάλο Παιχνίδι» των αυτοκρατορικών ανταγωνισμών στην Ανατολή (17ος - 19ος αι.)* (Ιωάννινα: Ινστιτούτο Ελληνο-Απωανατολικών Σπουδών, 2020), 20. ; Sariyannis, “An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek’s Travel Account in Central Asia,” 48

11 Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, I/150

12 Idem, I/161

13 Idem, I/163

14 Idem, I/255

stated as ‘it was God’s plan’.¹⁵ which could imply the occurrence of a coincidence. His route was Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, Kazan, Astrakhan, Shamakhi (Σαμαχί). According to Venetis, Vatatzis travelled in 1713 by ship from Astrakhan to Derbent.¹⁶ which has facilitated the dating of the rest of the journey too. Vatatzis resided in Shamakhi for a while.¹⁷ Thanks to the merchants who imported products from India, Shamakhi was an established trade city of importance.¹⁸ Please see Map 5 in Appendix III.

Approximately during 1714-1715 Vatatzis lived in Russia, mainly in Moscow but he was on the move. He visited Cossack Hetmanate (Καζακία, roughly modern-day Ukraine) and returned to Moscow. Then he went to St Petersburg and returned to Moscow through Veliky Novgorod (Νοβογραδία). Then, he repeats his journey to Persia.

In 1716 Vatatzis lives in Persia, a date that is shared in the *Voyages*.¹⁹ He was impressed by the city planning and the people in Isfahan; the most comprehensive narrations in the *Voyages* concern Isfahan. He describes in great detail the Savafid palace, the Čahār Bāg gardens, and the main square Naqš-e Jahān.²⁰ Vatatzis explores several cities of Persia. These are Shirvan (Σιρβάνι), Gilan (Γκυλάνι), Rasht (Ρέστη), Qazvin (Κασμπίν), Sava, Qom (Κούμι), Kasan, Ardabil (Ερτεβίλι). Please see Map 6 in Appendix III.

The following years Vatatzis lives in Moscow, from 1717-1718 until 1720. He implies that he spent a considerable amount of time in St Petersburg,²¹ probably around 1718-1719. Then he finally returned to his hometown, after many years of travelling. His return had no detours. On his way he completed writing the first part of the *Voyages*. He confessed that his travels started fourteen years ago, which was in 1708, leading to the conclusion that he returned to Istanbul in 1720.²²

15 *Idem*, I/256.

16 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

17 Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, I/350-361.

18 *Ibidem*.

19 *Idem*, I/847.

20 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

21 Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, I/866.

22 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 21.

Dwelling in Istanbul 1720-1726

For seven years between 1720 and 1726 Vasileios Vatatzis lived in Istanbul. His activities are unknown. During these years he made two or three short trips to Moscow without staying there, he returned as soon as possible.²³

Third departure from Istanbul in 1727

The next voyage starts in 1727; once again the destinations are multiple and lying across distant regions. In 1727 Vatatzis travels from Istanbul to Moscow and from there he departs to a long journey in Central Asia.²⁴ His first stop is, again, in Astrakhan.

The author went through rough conditions for two months when he crossed deserted lands to get from Astrakhan to Khiva, while on his way to Bukhara. The navigation was challenging, he came across wild animals and the water supply was scarce. It was a dangerous and long path where a navigating mistake could be fatal. The author describes his situation as nightmarish and recalls that when he and his companion reached Khiva they looked more dead than alive.

Harsh circumstances do not stop there. Vatatzis reaches Bukhara through Amu Darya river and the region known as Soghdiana in Ancient Greek authors. He survived the siege of Bukhara, when the city suffered an extreme famine to the point of cannibalism. The author confesses that he came close to death. It was when the siege was brought to an end, and Bukhara was freed, that Vatatzis decided to go to Europe. Please see Map 7 in Appendix 3.

During his return from Central Asia, Vatatzis went through Persia again, a visit which proved to be crucial for his fate. From Bukhara he crossed the Amu Darya river and reached Khiva where he stayed for a while. He was reluctant as to which path to follow next, given the experience of his inbound route. He came up with the solution to travel through the desert with an ambassador who was going to meet the Shah of Persia. They faced two weeks of thirst and hunger²⁵ until they reached Babarap (Μπαμπάρτ).

Around 1727-1728 Vatatzis meets Shah Nader.²⁶ He visits Mashhad (Μασάτι) and Kalat Nader (Καλάτι). Then he is headed towards Hyrcania, a region southward of the

²³ Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, II/15.

²⁴ *Idem*, p. 257.

²⁵ *Idem* II/669-670.

²⁶ Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

Caspian Sea. From Mashhad he goes to Sabzevar (Σανζαβάρ) and Neyshabur (Νισαβούρ), then he follows a detour to the opposite direction in order to visit Mazandaran (Μιζανδράν). The glory of the city is described in the *Voyages*. He continues to Tonekabon and Rasht.

While in Rasht, Vatatzis participated in a diplomatic mission to convey a message from Nader Shah to General Levasof.²⁷ General Levasof was a military general and an administrator in Russian newly annexated regions from Persia. He administered Derbend and Bakou as well as the southern side of the Caspian Sea, including the cities of Gilan, Mazandaran, and Astraband, where Vatatzis travelled.²⁸ This meeting can be dated around 1729. After the secret conversation with Levasof, Vatatzis moves on to Astrakhan and Moscow. Please see Map 8 in Appendix III.

Subsequently, Vataztis leaves Asia behind and is headed towards Western Europe, namely the Netherlands. Around 1730 he sketched the *Map of Central Asia*.²⁹ His route started from Moscow to Riga, where he visited Courland, modern day western Latvia, and continued to Prussia; Berlin, Hannover, Hamburg in Germany; Luxemburg; Amsterdam; Versailles, France.

In 1732 Vasilios Vatatzis visits Oxford to offer his *Map of Central Asia*.³⁰ After completing this task, he begins his return journey to Moscow, travelling through Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Copenhagen, and St Petersburg. When he arrives to Moscow, the narration of his trips in the *Voyages* comes to an end.

The rest of Vatatzis life is unknown

There is no information on Vatatzis activity during the last years he resided in Moscow.³¹ Some scholars support that he was working for the Russian government, as a specialist in Persian issues.³² In 1748 he completes the writing of *Persica*.³³ His work *Persica* suggests that he spent years in Nader Shah's court, where he collected evidence.

27 Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, II/934 ; Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#) ; Φιλυπίδης, *Γεωγραφικόν της Ρουμουνίας ες ακριβεστέραν και πληρεστέραν κατάληψιν της ιστορίας αυτής*, 268.

28 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 32.

29 Shamsiddin Kamoliddin, *Two Maps of Central Asia of the First Half of 18th century: New Sources on the Historical Ethno-Geography of Central Asia* (Saarbrücken: LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012), 21.

30 Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, II/1073 ; Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

31 Sariyiannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 49.

32 *Ibidem*.

33 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

However, only mere assumptions can be made for his middle age years, since there is no known relative source.

Table 2. The timeline of Vatatzis' life

	Exact dates	Approximate dates
	1694	Vatatzis is born in Istanbul.
	1708	He starts his travel to Moscow.
	1708	He lives for 6 months in Niznyh.
	1709-1711	He lives for 3 years in Moscow.
	1712	He returns from Moscow to Ottoman Empire.
	1712	He shortly stays in Istanbul.
	1712-1713	Vatatzis travels to Romania, Hungary, Poland. Then, he stays in Moscow.
	1713	He travels to Iran.
	1714-1715	He lives in Moscow
	1716	Vatatzis visits Iran A847
	1717-1720	He lives in Moscow and St Petersburg.
	1720	Vatatzis returns to Istanbul
	1721-1726	He stays in Istanbul. He visits Moscow three times without staying there
	1727	Vatatzis travels to Moscow and starts his journey
	1727-1728	He explores Central Asia and meets Nader Shah. He further explores Persia.
	1729	He returns to the Caspian Sea and meets General Levasof.
	1730	He stays in Moscow.
	1731-1732	He travels to Western and Northern Europe.
	1732	Vatatzis offers the <i>Map of Central Asia</i> to Oxford University.

The author's identity

The motive behind Vatatzis early travelling.

In the first verses of the *Voyages*, Vatatzis explained how he was led to travel from the early age of fourteen years old. It seems that this decision was a result of his exploratory nature combined with his family planning. He expresses:

*"I wanted to work as a merchant, and the prospect of travelling to many countries fascinated me."*³⁴

He adds:

*"my parents sent me Northwards, as they wanted, they offered their approval and their best wishes."*³⁵

Spyros Lamprou attributes the departure at such a young age, fourteen, to a possible financial struggle of Vatatzis' family.³⁶ It is also possible, he claims, that Vatatzis had younger siblings, too.³⁷ Indeed in the *Voyages* Vatatzis' family is presented in the time of his birth, and they are not mentioned again, so the presence of subsequent siblings if possible.

In any case, it is certain that Vatatzis' family had at least 6 children, which adds to the case that Vasileios Vatatzis could have been sent to work as a merchant in such a young age due to financial struggling.

The author's educational background

During the analysis of the *Voyages*, it is important to keep in mind the educational background of the author. This issue cannot be completely defined using the given sources, but we can extract some information to get an overall impression of the author's educational background.

Vatatzis has received classical education.³⁸ This is evident in multiple ways through his text in the *Voyages*, first and foremost through its form. The first-person literary

34 Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, I/29-30.

35 *Idem*, I/33-34.

36 Λάμπρος, «Κανανός Λάσκαρις και Βασίλειος Βατάτζης: δύο Έλληνες περιηγητές του ΙΕ και ΙΗ αιώνας»: 713.

37 *Ibidem*.

38 Χαράλαμπος Μηνάογλου, "Οι περιηγήσεις του Βασιλείου Βατάτζη," *Παρνασσός* Vol.ΜΔ, No.1 (2002): 237.

narrative with a geographical content alludes to the classical tradition of Dionysius Periegetes, 2nd century AD.³⁹ Dionysius is the most well-known traveler and Geographer of Antiquity, with great influence. His work is widely recognized and historically it has been included in textbooks repeatedly.⁴⁰

Vatatzis' choice of form in the *Voyages*, using heroic hexameter, is an additional influence from Dionysius Periegetes. It also highlights his classical background, since this style is certainly unusual for his time.⁴¹ In several lines the author supports that he is not well educated, but this stands in contrast to his work,⁴² so it is said probably out of modesty.

At the end of the first part, the author refers to sixteen well-known figures of Classical Mythology and philosophy. These testify at least a basic level of education.⁴³ To figure out if Vatatzis' education, an example of a rare reference in the text is needed. Indeed, there is one rare reference, when Vatatzis mentions Palladas, a Greek poet who lived around the fourth century AD.⁴⁴ This shows that Vatatzis was well-educated.

A more objective criterion to determine the author's level of intellect is languages. Vatatzis spoke at least five foreign languages: Latin, Arabic, Persian, and 'several European ones.'⁴⁵ Also, he uses specific terms to describe educational institutions, which implies that he has a deep understanding of the educational system. Namely, he differentiates between academies in Europe and monasteries in the East.⁴⁶ The former provides secular teachings while the latter religious.⁴⁷

The only scholar who states that Vatatzis lacks knowledge is Spyros Lampros.⁴⁸ Perhaps he means that Vatatzis was not devoted to a certain science. However, most scholars in the researched bibliography consider Vatatzis a highly knowledgeable person.

39 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

40 Μηνάογλου, «Οι περιηγήσεις του Βασιλείου Βατάτζη,»: 234.

41 *Ibidem.* ; Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

42 Μηνάογλου, «Οι περιηγήσεις του Βασιλείου Βατάτζη,»: 237.

43 Μηνάογλου, «Οι περιηγήσεις του Βασιλείου Βατάτζη,»: 236.

44 *Idem*, 237.

45 Φιλιππίδης, *Γεωγραφικόν της Ρουμουνίας ες ακριβεστέραν και πληρεστέραν κατάληψιν της ιστορίας αυτής*, 268 ; Λάμπρος, "Κανανός Λάσκαρις και Βασίλειος Βατάτζης: δύο Έλληνες περιηγηταί του ΙΕ και ΙΗ αιώνος,": 714.

46 Μηνάογλου, «Οι περιηγήσεις του Βασιλείου Βατάτζη,»: 239.

47 *Ibidem*.

48 Λάμπρος, "Κανανός Λάσκαρις και Βασίλειος Βατάτζης: δύο Έλληνες περιηγηταί του ΙΕ και ΙΗ αιώνος,": 714.

What is the character of the author?

The life of Vasileios Vatatzis suggests an intelligent and capable person. He earned the trust of Nader Shah, he lived in many different cities and he overcame difficulties. But his most important characteristic is his interest in learning new things. From an early stage of his life, he was interested to explore new lands and people. Some scholars find his narration of travels as a sign of complacency,⁴⁹ which of course cannot be confirmed nor rejected.

The reader of the *Voyages* can easily observe that it regularly shows a sense of humor, which by extent reflects the social skills of the author. However, in some instances his criticism becomes sharp, for example when referring to the followers of Dalai Lama. (See Chapter y) Overall, it can be said that Vatatzis has an enquiring mind, unusual interests, and the ability to adapt to multiple environments.

Movement

Vasileios Vatatzis is related to Modern Greek Enlightenment of 18th century in the Danube Principalities.⁵⁰ It is possible that he maintained connections with the group of Phanariote rulers. This is attested by the massive production of Vatatzis' works within the Danube Principalities.⁵¹

Vatatzis' oeuvre

This chapter will present the complete work of Vasileios Vatatzis, which consists of three publications. All three of them are important as historical sources. These are *The Voyages of Vasileios Vatatzis* (Periēgētikōn⁵²), which provides the main subject of analysis in this research, *The Map of Central Asia*, which accompanies the former in Legrand's publication and is mentioned throughout the research but is not dealt with exclusively in this dissertation, and *The History of Persia (Persica)*, which is not examined here. Despite the fact that this research excludes the analysis of *The History of Persia*, it will be presented in this chapter as part of the effort to get a general impression about the

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#)

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

⁵² Transliteration from Greek to Latin alphabet in this paper follows the guidelines of ISO 843

author and the reception of his works. The presentation of Vatatzis' works follows the order of their relevance in the research. For each work four pieces of information are gathered:

1. The description of the work's content.
2. Its manuscript forms or printed publications.
3. How the work was received by scholars from Vatatzis' time until now.
4. The preserved historical records of the work

The Voyages of Vasileios Vatatzis

Description of the Voyages

The *Voyages* of Vasileios Vatatzis is a text written in verses in which the author narrates his travels in Europe, Russia, and Central Asia while sharing his geographical and ethnographic observations. Although it is a single work, it is divided in two parts. In each part, Vatatzis describes a long cycle of his journeys. The author wrote the second part of *Voyages* considerably later than the first one.

The *Voyages* of Vasileios Vatatzis is not limited to a main subject. It, thus, offers diverse information associated with many sectors. The point of interest for this research is that *Voyages* is full of historical, political, ethnographic and societal observations about the Central Asian steppes.⁵³

The publication of Voyages

Spyros Lampros found the manuscript of *Voyages* in 1876 in British Museum Library. Specifically, the item was listed as Add.10,075.⁵⁴ He reported that the manuscripts were previously owned by Lord 'Gyilford' and then they were handed over to the British Museum.⁵⁵

The person who held Vatatzis' manuscript was Frederick North, 5th Earl of Guilford, whose name was often just "Guilford".⁵⁶ The ownership is proved by the

53 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 49

54 Λάμπρος, "Κανανός Λάσκαρις και Βασίλειος Βατάτζης: δύο Έλληνες περιηγηταί του ΙΕ και ΙΗ αιώνας," 713

55 Ibidem.

56 "Frederick North, 5th Earl of Guilford," Collection, The British Museum, last modified December, 1, 2020, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BI0G58587>; Richard Clogg, "Frederick North, the Fifth Earl of Guilford (1766-1827) The Philhellene's Philhellene" Speech, A ceremony to mark the 250th

bookplate on the manuscript.⁵⁷ This makes sense, since North was both a philhellene and a collector.⁵⁸ Also, his life span (1766-1827) is between the completion of *Voyages* and Lampros' discovery of the manuscript in the British Library. Considering the above, it is safe to assume that one of the first owners of the *Voyages* of Vasileios Vatatzis was Frederick North.

The *Voyages* was studied and analyzed for the first time in 1881.⁵⁹ Spyros Lampros was the first to publish quotes from the text.⁶⁰ The quotes alongside an introduction were published in the literary journal *Parnassos*.⁶¹ Spyros Lampros said at the time that the geographical approach of the *Voyages* was noteworthy and that in the future it should be published as a complete work.⁶² Although he was a harsh critic on the linguistic choices of Vatatzis, he considered him one of the greatest Greek Geographers during the Ottoman period.⁶³

The first complete version of the text was edited by Emile Legrand and it was published in 1886.⁶⁴ Emile Legrand (1841-1903) was a French Professor of Modern Greek Literature in Paris.⁶⁵ He excelled in compiling bibliographies, publishing, and he systematically maintained a collection of Greek literature written between 1476 and 1790.⁶⁶ This is the context in which he probably showed interest in studying Vatatzis' *Voyages*, and most importantly in publishing it. It is worth noting that Emile Legrand fostered the interest in Modern Greek literature among European countries.⁶⁷ Another

anniversary of the Ionian university's founding father birth, Ionian University, Corfu, February 7, 2016.

57 Add MS 10075, The British Library, last accessed December, 1, 2020, [Digitised Manuscripts \(bl.uk\)](https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullView/10075)

58 Richard Clogg, "Frederick North, the Fifth Earl of Guilford (1766-1827) The Philhellene's Philhellene" Speech, A ceremony to mark the 250th anniversary of the Ionian university's founding father birth, Ionian University, Corfu, February 7, 2016.

59 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 47.

60 Μιχάλης Μερακλής και Χριστίνα Λύσσαρη, "Βατάτζης, Βασίλειος," *Λεξικό Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Πρόσωπα, Έργα, Ρεύματα, Όροι*, 6η εκτύπωση (Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Πατάκη, 2014), 264.

61 *Ibidem*.

62 Λάμπρος, "Κανανός Λάσκαρις και Βασίλειος Βατάτζης: δύο Έλληνες περιηγηταί του ΙΕ και ΙΗ αιώνας," 719.

63 *Ibidem*.

64 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 49 ; Μερακλής και Λύσσαρη, "Βατάτζης, Βασίλειος".

65 Χρήστος Δανιήλ, "Legrand, Emile," *Λεξικό Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας. Πρόσωπα, Έργα, Ρεύματα, Όροι* (Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Πατάκη, 2014), 1233.

66 *Ibidem*.

67 *Ibidem*.

Greek manuscript of Eurasian interest published by Emile Legrand is 'Kitaia douleyousa'. Published in 1880 it focuses on 'the Tatar conquest of China'..⁶⁸

How was the *Voyages* received?

The *Voyages* can be approached from the scope of a variety of academic fields, such as Literature, History, Historical Geography etc. However, the academia missed out on its content until the recent years, when it gained attention in research..⁶⁹ Even in this case though, it is only used in the spectrum of Modern Greek Literature..⁷⁰ The reason behind the lack of research is not hard to find. The *Voyages* is written in Greek, while its content concerns Central Asian History. Greek-speaking scholars usually lack background in Central Asia, and vice-versa, experts in Central Asia usually do not speak Greek.

Here I should note that the language of the *Voyages* may prove difficult to read even for a Greek-speaking individual. It takes familiarity with 18th century Greek texts and access to historical dictionaries to understand the content with accuracy. This obstacle can be overcome to some extent with the selected parts that were translated within this paper. Meanwhile, the main point remains that the *Voyages* has rarely been used as a primary historical source for the History of Central Asia..⁷¹

Preserved records

Four manuscript copies of the *Voyages* are preserved today, the manuscript of Lampryllos in Smyrna, the MS10076 in British Museum, the Gedeon MS in Constantinople, and the Idromenos manuscript in Corfu..⁷² Lampryllos manuscript was published by Emile Legrand and is used in this dissertation..⁷³

68 Eftimios Nicolaïdis, "Verbiest, Spathar and Chrysanthos. The Spread of Verbiest's Science to Eastern Europe," in *The History of The Relations Between The Low Countries and China in The Qing Era (1644–1911)*, ed. Willy Vande Walle and Noël Golvers (Leuven: Leuven university press, 2003), 48.

69 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 47.

70 *Ibidem*.

71 *Ibidem*.

72 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

73 Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, 192.

The Map of Central Asia

Description of The Map of Central Asia

Vasileios Vatatzis sketched a *Map of Central Asia*, which he published in 1732. It has been supported that it is the first map of the specific region, whose creator visited the land himself.⁷⁴ The depicted region expands from Northern Khwarazm (Northern Chorasnia) to the threshold of Siberia and from Astrakhan to the east until Kashgar.⁷⁵ On the map, Vatatzis drew the Caspian Sea, the Aral Sea, and the peoples dwelling around them. The Eastern Caucasus, northern Iran, Transoxiana, and the Western Chinese Turkestan are visible too.⁷⁶ The map focuses on the nations residing in those lands and on trading cities. It depicts both inhabited and deserted areas, so a great part is depicted as a contiguous deserted land.⁷⁷ Few symbols were used to explain the places.⁷⁸ It functions both as a relief map and as a political map, since the indications of mountains and rivers coexist with the indications of political alliances.

The graphic part was in the center of the map, and the marginal sides were filled with the legend and additional text.⁷⁹ A list of peoples and cities was written in columns at the two sides of the map, the left side was written in Greek and the right side was written in Latin.⁸⁰ Additional text is written within the graphic part of the map, separate to the one on the legend.⁸¹ Vatatzis used an interesting method to indicate people's culture on the map.⁸² He drew tents or buildings to signify nomadic or sedentary lifestyle respectively. He indicated Muslim faith with minarets, and natural precious metals.⁸³

Above the map Vatatzis wrote a brief introduction of himself where he claims he is the first person to visit those lands and publish a map of the region.⁸⁴ He confesses went

74 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

75 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 56.

76 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

77 *Idem*.

78 *Idem*.

79 Λάμπρος, «Κανανός Λάσκαρις και Βασίλειος Βατάτζης: δύο Έλληνες περιηγηταί του ΙΕ και ΙΗ αιώνας»: 719.

80 *Ibidem*.

81 *Ibidem*.

82 Shamsiddin Kamoliddin, Two Maps of Central Asia of the First Half of 18th century: New Sources on the Historical Ethno-Geography of Central Asia (Saarbrücken: LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012), 37.

83 *Ibidem*.

84 Λάμπρος, «Κανανός Λάσκαρις και Βασίλειος Βατάτζης: δύο Έλληνες περιηγηταί του ΙΕ και ΙΗ αιώνας»: 719.

through troubles to make it, the trip was dangerous and exhausting.⁸⁵ It is often repeated that he visited those lands himself. His intention behind these words is probably to make sure his work gets recognition, and furthermore to add credibility to his work.

The publication of the *Map of Central Asia*

Vasileios Vatatzis completed the drawing of the *Map of Central Asia* around 1730.⁸⁶ In October 1732 the well-known cartographer John Senex (1719-1795) engraved Vatatzis' map in copper.⁸⁷ John Senex was a cartographer in the Royal Geographic Society of United Kingdom.⁸⁸ In 1732 Vatatzis offered the *Map of Central Asia* to the Bodleian library in Oxford.⁸⁹

How was the *Map of Central Asia* received?

When Spyros Lampros was searching for the works of Vatatzis, the *Map of Central Asia* was extremely hard to find. He requested the record in the Bodleian library in Oxford but it was not found.⁹⁰

The only copy of the map he could find was in the British Museum Library.⁹¹ The *Map of Central Asia* was attached to the manuscript of the *Voyages*.⁹² It was a copy of the map in lithography, published in 1732.⁹³

The *Map of Central Asia* by Vasileios Vatatzis is of great interest among the maps created between 16th and 18th century in Europe.⁹⁴ If one compares it to similar maps, which means maps created by European travelers in Central Asia in early 18th century, its accuracy is noteworthy.⁹⁵ The scholar Marinos Sariyannis suggests that Vasileios Vatatzis had access to Russian maps of the region, basing this assumption on the accuracy of the map and additional evidence from his research.⁹⁶ Another assumption with strong

85 *Ibidem*.

86 Kamoliddin, Two Maps of Central Asia of the First Half of 18th century, 21.

87 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 55.

88 Kamoliddin, Two Maps of Central Asia of the First Half of 18th century, 21.

89 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

90 Λάμπρος, «Κανανός Λάσκαρις και Βασίλειος Βατάτζης: δύο Έλληνες περιηγηταί του ΙΕ και ΙΗ αιώνας»: 719.

91 *Ibidem*.

92 *Ibidem*.

93 *Ibidem*.

94 Kamoliddin, Two Maps of Central Asia of the First Half of 18th century, 22.

95 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 55.

96 *Ibidem*.

evidence from the same research shows that the British cartographer Herman Moll used Vasileios Vatatzis' map as a source to produce his own map.⁹⁷

These assumptions suggest that The *Map of Central Asia* did exert influence from early on. Compared to the *Voyages*, the greater influence of the map can be attributed to the Latin translation. Thus, it achieved an aim that is subtle but nonetheless apparent in Vatatzis' work; to facilitate the knowledge of the Central Asia in Europe.

Preserved records of the *Map of Central Asia*

Seven copies of the map are preserved today. The British Museum holds two copies (10075 additional).⁹⁸ The French National Library in Paris holds three copies (C2206, AD109, AD109 double).⁹⁹ Two copies are located in Athens, one in the Gennadius Library and one in the National Hellenic Research Foundation, Institute for Neohellenic Research.¹⁰⁰

Persica

Description of *Persica*

Persica is a Nader Shah's biography (August 1688 – June 19, 1747), written in Greek. Ultimately, it is a History of Persia too, and it covers the time period from 1694 to 1747.¹⁰¹ Its language and style are plain.¹⁰² The historical and ethnographic value of *Persica* is profound. In fact, it is the sole historical source for some incidents of Persian History. For example, an exclusive information in *Persica* is the scheming of a secret plot against Shah Tahmasp.¹⁰³ Consequently, considering Vatatzis' access to this type of information, it can be implied that he reached a high position within the court of Nader Shah.

97 *Ibidem*.

98 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

99 *Idem*.

100 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 48.

101 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

102 *Idem*.

103 *Idem* ; Vatatzis *Persica* 195.

The publication of *Persica*

In 1748 Vatatzis completed *Persica*. In 1816 Daniil Filippidis published a summary of *Persica* in his book *The History and Geography of Romania*, written in Greek.¹⁰⁴ In fact, Daniil Filippidis was so convinced about the worth of *Persica* that he included a summary of *Persica* in his own book, despite the thematic dissimilarity. He explains that he decided to do so because he was afraid that the manuscript might get lost.¹⁰⁵ Finally, Nicolae Iorga published *Persica* in 1939.¹⁰⁶

How was *Persica* received?

Despite its historical importance for Persian History, *Persica* has not been significantly utilized as a source.¹⁰⁷ Many factors may have led to this, but probably an important factor is that *Persica* is written in Greek.

Preserved records

Two manuscripts of *Persica* are preserved today, the MS 1861 in the National Library of Greece and the Cotnari MS in Bucharest.¹⁰⁸ It is important to note the existence of a manuscript copy of this book in Romania. This location may suggest the influence of Vasilis Vatatzis work in the Danube Principalities.

Analysis of *Voyages*

In this chapter, an in-depth analysis of *Voyages* is offered. In contrary to the subsequent chapters of this dissertation, where the focus will shift to Vatatzis' references to nomadic peoples, here the *Voyages* is dealt with in its totality.

104 Λάμπρος, «Κανανός Λάσκαρις και Βασίλειος Βατάτζης: δύο Έλληνες περιηγηταί του ΙΕ και ΙΗ αιώνας»: 714; Φιλίππιδης, *Γεωγραφικόν της Ρουμουνίας ες ακριβεστέραν και πληρεστέραν κατάληψιν της ιστορίας αυτής*, 247-269.

105 Φιλίππιδης, *Γεωγραφικόν της Ρουμουνίας ες ακριβεστέραν και πληρεστέραν κατάληψιν της ιστορίας αυτής*, 268.

106 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 19.

107 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#); Φιλίππιδης, *Γεωγραφικόν της Ρουμουνίας ες ακριβεστέραν και πληρεστέραν κατάληψιν της ιστορίας αυτής*, 243.

108 Venetis, [Vatatzis, Vasilios](#).

When was Voyages written?

According to Michael Axworthy, whose study on Vatatzis' work is extensive, the compilation of *Voyages* was completed in 1748. However, *Voyages* was probably a work whose compilation lasted a lifetime..¹⁰⁹

Hereby the dating of the first section will be examined. The first section of *Voyages* was written during 1708-1720, while Vatatzis was on his first circle of travels. Specifically, it was probably written during the end of the aforementioned time period, since Vatatzis attests that he was writing at the time of his return..¹¹⁰

Moreover, his intention at the time was to mark his work as completed at the end of the first section. This is evident by his literary choice to end this section with an acrostic..¹¹¹ Namely, in the last verse, every second line begins with a capital letter. The capital letters form the full name of the author, Vasileios Vatatzis (ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΣ ΒΑΤΑΤΖΗΣ). Consequently, the acrostic acts as a signature of the author. Thus, it is safe to assume that Vatatzis considered his work finished at that time.

Comparing Vatatzis' narration of Persia with the dates of Persian history, it can be concluded that the first part of *Voyages* was had been completed in 1722..¹¹² Sultan Husayn lost his throne in 1722, yet Vatatzis names him Shah or Persia, so he wrote these verses before 1722..¹¹³

However, the writing of the second part of *Voyages* should be dated much later. In the text, Vatatzis mentions his published map, which was published in 1732, as well as his manuscript on Persica which was completed in 1748..¹¹⁴ Therefore, *Voyages* was either completed in 1748, in the same year as Persica, or even later.

Brief literary analysis

Vatatzis wrote *Voyages* in verses. In total, he created 2.100 verses, each of which consists of 15 syllables..¹¹⁵ He used a peculiar combination of conversational and formal language,

109 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 19.

110 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 19.

111 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 20.

112 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 20.

113 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 20.

114 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 20.

115 Μερακλής και Λύσσαρη, «Βατάτζης, Βασίλειος,» 264.

which was received critically at the time.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, the historical, geographical, and folklore insights found in his work were well received.¹¹⁷ What is more, the literary importance of *Voyages* lies in the fact that it is an early case of Modern Greek travel literature.¹¹⁸

International state of play in Inner Eurasia during 17th-18th century

In the middle of 18th century, nomadic societies were still present in Central Asia despite the territorial expansions of Russia and China.¹¹⁹ However, their power and autonomy had declined.¹²⁰ The nomadic peoples of Inner Eurasia had to face the expansionist policies of three empires, the Qing, the Persian, and the Russian.¹²¹ The nomadic population that found itself subjugated to the empires was increasing. The military technological advancement in 19th century ended the nomads' ability to wage war effectively against the empires, so their power since then diminished.¹²²

Since Vatatzis is during the first half of 18th century, he witnesses the chronological threshold between the prosperity of the nomadic societies and their obsolescence. Still, the expansion of empires should not be perceived as an outright destruction of the nomadic world. There are two factors behind this, the merely theoretical subjugation of a nation, and the mutually beneficial arrangements between the empires and the nomads.

The nomadic pastoralist tradition of the steppes

The years when Vatatzis visits Central Asia mark the start of the decline of the nomadic populations. It is useful, before moving on to this decline, to briefly explain why nomadic populations had flourished so far.

116 *Ibidem*.

117 *Ibidem*.

118 *Ibidem*.

119 David Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia* (Singapore: C.O.S. Printers Pte Ltd, 2018), 2: 176.

120 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 176.

121 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 1.

122 *Ibidem*.

The scarcity of agriculture and food in the steppes and the difficulty to sustain oneself deeply shaped the lifeways of the nomadic pastoralists of the steppes, who were mainly Mongols and Turkic people.¹²³ Pastoralists had to excel in finding their direction in the steppes, moving with their animals from place to place, hunting or fighting in order to survive. It is not a surprise that they were skilled warriors when their everyday life taught them every survival skill needed in war.¹²⁴

On a large scale, this meant that the nomadic armies could move immediately at any given time needed. Their ability to hunt meant that they need no supply chain in their expeditions, so they did not have to carry food with them, nor additional people. Every person in the army was a warrior. Less weight allowed them to have ponies, a smaller breed of horses who were faster. A common practice for each person was to travel with two horses and ride them alternatively to keep them well maintained.¹²⁵

The above characteristics offered the nomads the advantage of time, and thus the chance to loot the natural resources of agricultural societies. In China, it took a few hours for nomads to steal animals and kidnap people, while it took the imperial army days to reach the affected point.¹²⁶ However, these advantages were counterbalanced by the difficulty to get organized and reach agreements in regional levels.¹²⁷

Transitional period for Central Asia, 1650-1750

The collapse of the Mongol empire at the start of 15th century initiated the rivalry among the countries surrounding Central Asia, who contested over gaining control of the vast territory whose possession had fallen into uncertainty.¹²⁸ In 17th century the most powerful countries which competed for Central Asia were Muscovite Russia, Persian Empire, and China.

In 1650-1750 most territories of Inner Eurasia resemble colonies of either the Russian or the Qing empire, with the exception of Transoxiana¹²⁹ which is mentioned by

123 *Idem*, 12.

124 *Ibidem*.

125 *Ibidem*.

126 *Ibidem*.

127 *Idem*, 13.

128 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, i

129 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 175.

Vatatzis. This was reflected in the Nerchinsk treaty.¹³⁰ In the Nerchinsk treaty, the Russian and the Qing empire agreed on their borders and also on their spheres of influence. Both empires wanted to secure their trade routes.¹³¹ The additional motive of the Russian empire was to avoid the high cost of funding a military expedition to remote parts of Siberia.¹³² At that point, the Russian sphere of influence met the Chinese in the Kazakh and Mongol steppes.¹³³

Russian empire

The conquest of Siberia in 17th century was such a major step for the Muscovite empire that it tripled its territory. Afterwards, the Muscovite empire repressed the local communities.¹³⁴ The time period when Vatatzis is travelling, from 1713 to 1732, Siberia has already become a vital part of the Russian empire. After its conquest was completed, Russia proceeded to conquer the south, facing various nomadic populations in the Ukrainian, Kazakh, and Mongol steppes.¹³⁵

A turning point in Russian empire's relationship with the populations to the east of the Volga was the annexation of Bashkiria.¹³⁶ During 1730s Russia built a line of defense dotted with fortresses in strategic points.¹³⁷ The Orenburg line, as it is called, stretched from the southern end of the Urals to the southern Siberia.¹³⁸ Forts were built near river crossings, which were important because they acted as natural borders between different peoples.¹³⁹ The forts of Orenburg line represented the Russian power in southwestern Siberia. There, the Russian empire negotiated with local chiefs, offered payments for cooperation, or ordered attacks.¹⁴⁰

130 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 180 ; Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 2.

131 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 180.

132 *Ibidem*.

133 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 1.

134 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 175.

135 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 1.

136 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 195.

137 *Ibidem*.

138 *Ibidem*.

139 *Idem*, 196.

140 *Ibidem*.

Already in 1750, the expansion of the Russian empire to the south was so rapid that the aforementioned forts lost their importance. The new line of forts reached the Caspian Sea, thus hindering pastoralists from following the migration flow that was taking place for millennia..¹⁴¹

Qing empire

The Qing dynasty took pride in its expansionist policy, claiming that conquering Xinjiang did not result in financial damage, while 'all previous dynasties, Han, Tang, Song, and Ming, drained the treasuries without expanding a bit'..¹⁴² The Manchu dynasty conquered Xinjiang and parts of Mongolia, doubling the overall territory of the Qing empire..¹⁴³

In the middle of 18th century, the Qing empire conquered and destroyed the Dzungar Khanate..¹⁴⁴ This event had devastating consequences for the study of Oirat history, which will be explained in the chapter on Oirats. Here it should be stated that this was the destruction of the last large empire in the steppes. Meanwhile, the Qing empire increased its influence in the Tarim basin and the Tibetan mountain range..¹⁴⁵

Persian empire

When it comes to the Persian empire, the central figure of military action is Nader Shah. One captivating primary historical source about Nader Shah's life is another work of Vatatzi, *Persica*..¹⁴⁶

There, Vatatzi narrates the great discipline of the Shah and devotion to his vision. He participated often in military trainings to maximise the efficiency of his communication with the army and to convey to his soldiers the example of hard work. In *Persica* he is seen as a capable warrior, as well as an intelligent trainer of the military..¹⁴⁷

¹⁴¹ *Idem*, 197.

¹⁴² Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 44.

¹⁴³ Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 196.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁵ Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 1.

¹⁴⁶ Axworthy, Michael. *Empire of the mind : a history of Iran* (London: Hurst, 2007), 53.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

Consequently, Nader led many destructive campaigns in Transoxiana.¹⁴⁸ The political landscape in Chorasmia was so complex, including many separate local elites, that Nader also needed middlemen and a series of alliances, on top of his military attacks. Wilde 96 His influence in Khiva came earlier than the annexation. In early 18th century Nader Shah had to give his approval for anyone to rule over Khiva.¹⁴⁹

It was a harsh reality in many ways. First, for the local people who had to face constant warfare.¹⁵⁰ Secondly, even for Nader Shah's army it took great efforts to complete the conquest. The second expedition of the Persian campaign had likely been lost in Chorasmia.¹⁵¹ This brings to mind Vatatzi's autobiographical remarks; in 1728, in the same time period, he was lost in the desert and described a near-death experience. These underline the difficulty of the land.

Nader Shah finally conquered Transoxiana in 1740.¹⁵² This marked a tipping point for the history of Central Asia, namely the demise of Mongolic dynasties who were descendants of Chinggis Khan.¹⁵³ The last Khan and descendant was murdered in 1747 in Bukhara.¹⁵⁴

The Eurasian struggle for control over Central Asia increased in 19th century.¹⁵⁵ By that time, due to technological advancements the empires could exceed the military power of nomadic populations.¹⁵⁶

However, in the meantime the sedentary empires in Central Asia often used diplomacy, bribery, or trade to handle the nomadic populations. Also, the Russian empire, the Persian empire, and the Qing empire all used the nomads as the most effective military force against other nomads. For example, Kalmyks were enlisted in Russian army, and Turkmens in Persian. Russia's approach is analyzed in the respective sections on Kalmyks and Kazakhs, as well as the case of Turkmens. An example of a successful trade agreement is presented in the following section. It is to illustrate how a nomadic nation and an empire can have the same goal. Also, this trade was proposed by the Kazakhs to

148 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 200.

149 Wilde and Allaeva, "Lost in Khvārazm," 97.

150 *Ibidem*.

151 *Ibidem*.

152 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 200.

153 *Ibidem*.

154 *Ibidem*.

155 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, i.

156 *Ibidem*.

the Qing empire. This demonstrates that the empires were not always the ones who designed and shaped policy.

Exemplary trade agreement between a sedentary empire and a nomadic population

The vast territorial expansion of Qing empire towards the West, brought the Manchu dynasty in front of a new challenge; the sustainability of the Xingang province in military and economic terms.¹⁵⁷ The problems that the Qing empire faced in administrating Xingang were eventually resolved with the help of the Kazakh people. The factors that led to this cooperation will be explained below.

In the middle of 18th century, the Qing empire was dealing with constant clashes against the Dzungars, an Oirat-Mongol population. In the state of turmoil, the Qing empire could not maintain a stable livestock farming, which was a crucial unit for the economy to secure troops, food, and transportation. Even after the Dzungars were undoubtedly defeated in 1757, new needs for extensive livestock came up. The land in Xingang required wide-scale improvements using draft animals, while stud farms needed horses to support garrisons.¹⁵⁸

To make matters worse, the Qing empire could not address the issue of livestock on its own. Animals bred in the central provinces of China could not endure the transport, the distance between the central provinces and Xingang was too great. Many animals died on the road to Xingang and horses reached the destination undernourished. On the other hand, Kazaks pastured animals in northern Dzungaria, a land that was controlled by Oirat Mongols. This is why they welcomed the change of power in 1758 when the Qing empire occupied Dzungaria.¹⁵⁹

In 1758 the Kazakhs approached the Qing empire and proposed two offers. First, to spy on Amursana, the last Khan of Oirat-Mongols, and second, to initiate trading charger horses and sheep. Here, Kazakhs demonstrate initiative and political thought. Not only did they assess the needs of the Qing empire in 1758, but they also proposed a solution. The Manchu aristocrats accepted Kazaks' proposal.¹⁶⁰

157 Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 45.

158 Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 45.

159 *Ibidem*.

160 *Idem*, 46.

This is how bartering trade was established between the Qing empire and Kazakhs, a nomadic population. The trading of textiles with animals officially started in 1758 and the agreement was long-lasting. This peaceful trading process on the Chinese borders was phenomenal, since it rarely existed during the previous dynasties of Song and Ming. Eventually, it became one of the foundations of Xingjian economy.

Depiction of Peoples of Central Asia in *Voyages*

The *Voyages* are an important primary source about peoples of Central Asia in the 18th century because it provides many ethnographic remarks. Thanks to its spontaneity, travel literature often mentions details on everyday life that cannot be found in formal documents. The *Voyages* is no exception, as it manifests the author's observations, as well as his afterthoughts, about foreign lands and different cultures. However, he also falls into inaccuracies or vagueness in cases where he is not familiar with the land.

Methodology

Methodologically speaking, the first step was to trace the references of the peoples throughout the book, a procedure that is reflected in *Appendix II: Index of Peoples of Central Asia in Voyages*. Then, a selection of excerpts was made based on the historical importance and textual cohesion. The excerpts were typed in polytonic Greek and then translated with extensive use of dictionaries.

For every nation examined, the most crucial historical information is given concerning the 18th century, with the utmost goal to contextualize the original work of Vatatzis. The historical narration is based on secondary sources and seeks to confirm Vatatzis account or to find contradictions and attempt to explain them.

Types of information about tribes provided in *Voyages*.

For every nation he presents, Vatatzis always mentions their religion. This characteristic of a nation seems to be the most crucial to him. The name of the ruler is also often mentioned. The depiction of peoples' lifestyle is of particular interest. Finally, in most cases Vatatzis names the nations with their typical name, such as Kalmyks,

Karakalpaks, Kazakhs, Baskirs, Turkmens, and Khanate of Khiva. However, the identification of peoples is not always straightforward.

The interrelation among nomadic people in *Voyages*.

The author of *Voyages* recognizes the similarities among many tribes and often compares them. Instead of presenting each nation separately, Vatatzis often expresses that one nation is similar in everything with another one.

Vatatzis groups together as similar Kalmyks and the nations he calls "Kondosēdes" and "Zofedes" who according to Dr. Stefanos Kordosis¹⁶¹ are Oirat tribes. Likewise, Kazakhs and Karakalpaks are related to each other in the author's words. Right after Kazakhs, Karakalpaks are presented in *Voyages*, beginning with 'they are identical in everything with Kazakhs'. This correlation secures that the author does not repeat himself. It might also reflect the way he gathered information. Maybe he had understood in depth or came close to some nations and drew a parallel from them for the nations he knew little about.

Therefore, the most important nations that are mentioned in *Voyages* can be separated into the following two groups, according to their religion, language, and culture. On the one hand, Kalmyks, Kondosedes, and Zofedes are Oirat Mongols, predominantly Buddhist. On the other hand, Karakalpaks, Kazakhs, Turkmens, Bashkirs are Turkic people, predominantly Sunni Muslim. The two subsequent chapters follow the respective division.

Buddhist Oirat Peoples of Central Asia (Mongolic)

This chapter deals with three Oirat populations that are portrayed in great detail in *Voyages*. Oirats are a people of Mongolic origin who eventually shaped a distinct culture, religion, and language, which was still considered as a part of the broader Mongol culture and language.

¹⁶¹ Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 28-29.

Oirats have influenced Central Asia greatly; One could argue that their most decisive action was establishing Dalai Lama as the leader of Tibet, giving him both the highest religious and political power. This religious zeal drew the attention of Vatatzis too.

Yet, their part of history is significantly omitted in historiography.¹⁶² This can be partly explained by the limitations of the given sources. After the Qing empire annexed Dzungaria, the Chinese emperor Qianlong seized all texts of the Oirat culture. The Oirat books were brought in modern-day Beijing and studied.¹⁶³ The Oirat history was retold by Chinese officials, and the original Oirat texts were destroyed.¹⁶⁴ The dearth of sources underlines the importance of *Voyages* as a primary historical source.

Kalmyks

Translation

Voyages Part I/309-324, Kalmyks

In the valley one can see from the river [Volga]
 Kalmyks dwell, they also have a Khan,
 they call him Ayukan, and his authority
 is exercised over all people, as he rules over them.
 Every spring they approach the riverside
 closely, in need of water;
 sometimes they do not approach the riverside at all,
 instead, they head for the heartland and live there,
 they have a very large number of animals which graze there.
 I also have to say this, so that the reader know it,
 all this dry land does not belong to any master;
 from within Saratov all the way to the Caspian Sea
 in both riversides there is no city to be found;

162 Richard Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State" in *Buddhism in Mongolian History, Culture, and Society*, ed. Vesna Wallace (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 24.

163 *Ibidem*.

164 *Ibidem*.

nothing but the forts we mentioned,
and when we passed them, we made it to Astrakhan.

Voyages Part II/65-96, Kalmyks

Not far from Volga, the aforementioned river,
[there is a] nomadic nation called Kalmyks,
Perhaps this people are in fact the Massagetae ,
they are numerous, countless warriors;
they own countless horses and beasts;
Sometimes they dwell close to Volga
other times they distance themselves away to the East;
they are ruled by a chief from their own tribe,
hereditary, from the family line of Ayuka,
in theory it is subjugated, but in reality only partially,
to the Russian scepter, as it is said.
Religiously they believe in idolatry,
carrying many idols there in the desert,
having devoted priests for their religion,
whom they call Mantzedes;
their nutritional habits are foreign to all,
However, eating dairy is common to all nomads,
likewise eating animals and subsisting on prey;
this tribe, which lives this way,
considers nothing as polluted, nothing that lives,
nothing that can be touched or seen, goes to waste,
Including milk and blood, however rotten and ill-scented something may be
and everything and all animals are used equally.
Far from them and more eastwards there is another tribe,
identical in everything to the one mentioned above;
it is considered subjugated to the Russians,

but it is independent, as well, and self-sufficient.
 So, I wonder how these nations can be subjugated,
 in those lands where they move as the clouds move in the sky?
 How can anyone conquer
 those that are like fish in the ocean's depths?

The Map of Central Asia, Kalmyks

Kalmyks, subordinated to the imperial and monarchic rule of the almighty Russian empire,
 are a populous nation, living in tents, skilled in war, rich in cattle, eating meat, drinking milk, and the occasional prey, and dressed using their skins as garments. Their religion is entirely paganism. Its ruler inherits the rule through succession, and, during the time I stayed there, his name was Ayuka Khan.

History of the ethnonym 'Kalmyks'

The Oirats who subdued Mongolia in 14th century acquired the Turkic name 'Qalmaqs'. The name deviated in Russian so that 'Kalmyks' included Oirats altogether. The only population who self-identified as Kalmyks were Oirats in Russian territory in 19th century, thus today the term Kalmyks connotes the Oirats living alongside the river Volga.¹⁶⁵

The process of settlement to the riversides of Volga

In 14th century Oirats reclaimed their autonomy from Chingis Khan Mongols and formed the Dzungar empire. Its capital city was Qulja, modern day Yining. The Oirat confederation included Torghud, Dörbet, and Koshut tribes. When Eastern Mongols increased their sphere of influence, Western Mongols had to move further West.¹⁶⁶

Russia had annexed Astrakhan in 1554.¹⁶⁷ In 1608 Koshut Oirats arrived to Volga to loot.¹⁶⁸ They were the first Oirat tribe to approach the area. Gradually, more Oirat tribes followed their example and approached the steppes around the Caspian Sea to loot,

¹⁶⁵ Christopher Atwood, "Kalmyks," *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongolian Empire*, (New York: Facts On File, 2004).

¹⁶⁶ Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 22

¹⁶⁷ Atwood, «Kalmyks».

¹⁶⁸ *Ibidem*

as well as to settle.¹⁶⁹ Around 1620 Torghud, Derbent, and Koshut tribes settled north of the Caspian Sea, alongside the rivers Volga, Yarik, and Eba.¹⁷⁰ This population became known as Kalmyks.¹⁷¹

In 1630 the Torghud tribe conquered the steppes around the Caspian Sea.¹⁷² During the following decades, from 1640 to 1680 their population grew, as more Oirats migrated there.¹⁷³ In 1648 the Torghud tribe reached the river Volga, and they crossed it in 1656.¹⁷⁴ The newcomer Oirat tribes fought against each other for the control of resources.¹⁷⁵ This dynamic changed when Ayuka Khan came to power.¹⁷⁶ He is the ruler Vatatzis mentions as 'Ayukhan', the chief of Kalmyks.

Ayuka Khan became the chief in 1669 succeeding the position of his father, Puntsog who reigned between 1661 and 1669. Ayuka Khan united the dispersed tribes into a single confederation. It counted almost 40,000 to 50,000 families.¹⁷⁷

Kalmyks become a part of the Russian Empire.

Kalmyks had to come to an agreement with the Russian empire, which had annexed the territory around the Caspian Sea.¹⁷⁸ In exchange for not paying taxes, the Kalmyks contributed to army forces, fighting against the Kazakhs and other Mongolian tribes of the Golden Horde.¹⁷⁹ In 1655 the Kalmyks swore allegiance to Russia for the first time.¹⁸⁰ The members of the Kalmyk nobility were not considered subjects to Russia, but the oath meant acceptance of the Russian authority.¹⁸¹ The oaths were taken in Russian, which may be indicative that Russians were the ones who composed them and initiated the approach in the first place. Also, it may indicate that the oath was not directly felt by the Kalmyks. Only a rough translation was given in the Oirat language.¹⁸²

169 *Ibidem*

170 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 22

171 *Ibidem*

172 Atwood, «Kalmyks».

173 *Ibidem*

174 *Ibidem*

175 *Ibidem*

176 Atwood, «Kalmyks».

177 *Ibidem*.

178 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 22

179 *Ibidem*

180 Atwood, «Kalmyks».

181 *Ibidem*

182 *Ibidem*

Nevertheless, the Kalmyks succeeded in strengthening their position towards Russia under the Ayuka Khan (1669–1724) leadership, in other words the time period when Vatatzis visited the area.

Also, Kalmyks secured warfare equipment from the Russian Empire.¹⁸³ This level of cooperation suggests that the Russian authorities trusted the Kalmyk nobility, in the sense that handling weapons to a warlike group would prove catastrophic, had the Kalmyks decided to turn against Russia. Indeed, this cooperation proved to be beneficial for Russia. Kalmyks could fight effectively against other hostile nomadic populations. They succeeded in repelling Tatars in Krimea, Nogays, Bashkirs, and the rebellious Kossaks.¹⁸⁴

The balance of power started to shift in Russia's favor in 1718 when Peter the Great (1682-1725) completed the implementation of defense constructions. Fortresses were built from river Don to Tsaritsyn alongside the Volga river, modern day Volgograd. The Russian Empire annexed Astrakhan and named it a province. The government of Astrakhan attempted to interfere in internal issues of Kalmyks, namely to impose his choice of person for the Kalmyk leadership.¹⁸⁵

Russia's power increasingly forced the Kalmyks to accept its decisions and orders. After the governor of Astrakhan failed to interfere, the two sides compromised. Tseren Dondug, the son of Ayukhan, became the new leader of Kalmyks, but they were now forced to swear allegiance to the Russian Empire once again. This time the members of the Kalmyk nobility became subjects too, just like the rest of the Kalmyk population. The oath was taken in Oirat language [which suggests that it was clearer to the Kalmyks.] Also, the Kalmyks were increasingly pressured into converting to Christianity.¹⁸⁶

Kalmyks' prosperity dropped significantly in the decades 1740-1760 due to the Russian expansion alongside the river Volga. They lost their pasturelands and animals en masse; as an alternative, some begun to rely on fishing. The Russian borders were expanding while Kalmyks were forced to enlist in remote Russian military campaigns which had little loot to offer them.¹⁸⁷

183 *Ibidem*

184 *Ibidem*

185 *Ibidem.*

186 *Ibidem.*

187 *Ibidem.*

The end of Kalmyk self-governance

Russian interventionism was soon met with dismay. A turning point for Kalmyk history was when Catherine the Great restructured the traditional hierarchy of Kalmyks.¹⁸⁸ Zarghu was an important part of Oirat hierarchy, a court with the highest rank of notables, next in power after the Khan or the Khung taiji.¹⁸⁹ It consisted of people stemming from the same tribe as the ruler.¹⁹⁰ In Kalmyks' case zarghu members were Torghud, direct subjects of the ruler.¹⁹¹ Catherine the Great transformed the court into an official institution with a representative character. Then, zarghu had to include three Torghud subjects of Khan, one Lama, and one noble official from each of the following tribes: Torghud, Khoshut, and Dorbod.¹⁹² The nobility elected the officials, and the monasteries elected Lama.¹⁹³ This could signify a reduced effort to convert the Kalmyks into Christianity during these years.

The reform triggered what came to be known as the Great Flight of Kalmyks, in 1771.¹⁹⁴ In 1771, the Kalmyks were divided into two separate populations when a substantial part of Kalmyk nobles migrated eastwards to escape the Russian rule. Their goal was to reclaim Dzungaria. Damaged by hunger and Kazakh attacks, they eventually surrendered to the Qing empire. Today, their descendants form part of Xingiang Mongols.¹⁹⁵

The Russian authorities responded by forbidding more Kalmyk nobles to flee. Guards made sure that the rest of the Kalmyk nobility remained within the Russian territory.¹⁹⁶ This confirms the importance of Kalmyks as military assets for the Russian empire. At the same time, if Kalmyks left Russia they could pose a new threat. Catherine the Great completely downgraded Kalmyks' position, in many ways. She evicted several

188 Christopher Atwood, "Titles, Appanages, Marriages and Officials: A Comparison of Political Forms in the Zünghar and Thirteenthcentury Mongol Empires," in *The History of Mongolia: Yuan and Late Medieval Period* (Folkestone UK: Global Oriental, 2010) Volume 3: 616.

189 *Idem*, 618.

190 *Idem*, 618.

191 *Idem*, 616.

192 *Idem*, 616.

193 Atwood, «Kalmyks».

194 *Ibidem*; Atwood, "Titles, Appanages, Marriages and Officials: A Comparison of Political Forms in the Zünghar and Thirteenthcentury Mongol Empires": 616.

195 Christopher Atwood, "Flight of Kalmyks," *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongolian Empire*, (New York: Facts On File, 2004).

196 Atwood, «Kalmyks».

Kalmyk leaders in St Petersburg, abolished Oirat titles, and subordinated Kalmyks under the power of the governor of Astrakhan.¹⁹⁷

The achievement of relative stability under the Russian Empire

The history of Kalmyks in Volga's riverside during 17th-18th centuries shows that their autonomy was gradually limited due to the rule of the Russian empire. The most severe impact from their subjugation was the obligation to fight in Russia's name, under its terms.

On the other hand, these centuries are defined by relative stability, in the sense that there is an absence of a large-scale war or any other traumatizing event for peoples' collective memory. Comparing this history of Kalmyks to other Oirat populations underlines this relative stability. Next to Mongol contest for resources which perpetuated revenge, which in Oirats' case was additionally fueled by the interreligious negative sentiments, it could be said that Kalmyks' settlement within the Russian territory provided relative stability. Of course, this does not equal permanent peace, since Kalmyks still had to fight other nomadic populations on Russia's behalf. But it does mean that there was an established status quo which discouraged surprise attacks and patrilineal revenge compared to merely nomadic-controlled territories.

Even the subjugation to the Russian empire was not a result of large-scale violence, but rather of long-term negotiations based on the balance of power. In 17th century this balance was still delicate but from 18th century Russia was dominant. Moreover, Russia allowed the Kalmyks to preserve their way of life, which is confirmed by Vatatzis' narration.

In the first half of 18th century, when *Voyages* was written, the Kalmyks enjoyed great freedom. Their mobility prevented direct power on them. Typical aspects of subjugation, such as the collection of taxes, were incompatible with their military strength and their lifestyle. As Vatatzis writes, their location was unpredictable, as they came back and forth to the riversides and to the heartlands. It took gradual financial and population decline for Kalmyks to come under Astrakhan administration.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibidem*

Kondosēdes (Dzungar Oirats)

The ethnonym

In the second part of *Voyages*, Vatatzis mentions a nation which he calls "Kondosēdes".¹⁹⁸ It is safe to assume that he is referring to Dzungar Oirats, based on the information he provides about this nation and on its placement in the *Map of Central Asia*.¹⁹⁹ Still, it is unknown why Vatatzis used this uncharted ethnonym, which is highly unusual.²⁰⁰ This subchapter provides a translation of the verses on this nation, it attempts to explain the origin of the ethnonym 'Kondosēdes' and then it presents the history of Dzungar Oirats.

Translation

Voyages Part II / 258 – 263, The nation of Kondosēdes

After the aforementioned Kazakh nomads
in distance from them, not northwards,
but to their east
dwells another nomadic nation ,
very similar in everything as the aforementioned Kalmyks,
with no difference between them and the former;
they are called by the name Kondosēdes
and their appearance and looks resemble those of Kalmyks.
However, their ruler rules and commands
to put it simply he reigns over them;
his orders are harsh and all of them are executed immediately,
regardless of what it is requested to be done.
They wage war bravely,
and they attack the enemy fearlessly, like beasts.

Once, they subjugated China too,
in other words "Kitai" (China) found itself subject to them;

198 The transcription of ethnonyms written in *Voyages* is based on the system of the Library of Congress, throughout this dissertation. For the romanization rules followed, please visit <https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsol/romanization/greek.pdf>

199 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 27.

200 *Ibidem*.

on that, I would like to make a short clarification,
and then I will circle back to where I stopped.
At that time people turned against each other,
and power was divided between two kings,
which triggered a civil war,
dividing the people into two different sides.
Then, one of the two kings seeking for help,
invited this people, Kondosēdes, as allies;
of these, a large segment with numerous warriors,
suddenly entered inside the Great Wall;
it diffused like a long violent river,
killing the enemies like a flood.
Next, they killed none other than the king himself,
and this is how their own warlord became king;
thanks to this, through succession, his line remained in power
and, ever since until now, China, has been reigned by them.
These issues concern China and I will not go further,
so I return immediately to the Kondosēdes nomads.

Close to these Kondosēdes, there is also this legendary man,
whom they worship and before whom they bow down,
I am referring to Dalai Lama, as they call him,
for whom they all jibber-jabber nonsense.
In a way he has become a master
and he holds a power over idolatry;
he orders and commands as he likes, promotes or demotes according to his taste,
forgives or punishes whomever he likes, without being held accountable;
in fact his followers go dumb to such an extent,
that they believe Dalai Lama never dies.
So, they foolishly claim that when he gets old
he does not die like a mortal but he is reborn young;

they say a lot of foolish things about him,
 and everything is full of nonsense and foolishness, with all kinds of jibber-jabber.
 However, I believe, as I have heard
 by some of those people who were reasonable -therefore I was convinced -
 that the Dalai Lama has a faction of some sort
 which work for him and participates in religious ceremonies;
 those in the highest rank of the hierarchy are called Lama,
 those under them are called Mantzēdes and all of them are believers;
 This faction completely glorifies him
 and he reciprocates from time to time;
 thus, one hand washes the other, as the saying goes
 and in this way they deceive the naïve.
 I will, moreover, say, my dear reader, the following for you to know,
 and read carefully for it is useful,
 everyone in this order and those guiding this religion,
 I am talking about this filthy idolatry,
 they all remain celibate so that they remain chaste,
 while behind closed doors their actions are devilish.

Etymology

It is unknown why Dzungar Oirats were named Kondosēdes in *Voyages*. These are two suggestions that do not provide a proven etymology but could be helpful in further research. It should be noted that in 'Kondos[ides]' the ending -ides is a typical addition from the Greek language which is common until today, so it should be removed from the original ethnonym.

In modern day Uzbek, qondosh means consanguineous²⁰¹, related by birth in the same family. It means 'blood' in the word 'blood brother'.²⁰² If this word was used at the time, it could imply that members of other Oiratic tribes were referring to Dzungar Oirats as 'blood brothers' or 'family', which matches the understanding of their relationship. Of

201 *Uzbek English Dictionary*, s.v. "consanguineous," date accessed 10/1/2021, [English to Uzbek Meaning of consanguine - uzbek.english-dictionary.help \(english-dictionary.help\)](http://uzbek.english-dictionary.help).

202 Student Dictionary, (Khorezm, Uzbekistan: Khonka Regional Boarding School Of World Languages), s.v. 'blood brother', [A \(at.ua\)](http://A.at.ua)

course, these nations did not speak Uzbek but Mongolic, so the term could be a translation that was passed on to Vatatzis.

Another suggestion is Kondolong Ubashi as an origin of the name. He was an Oirat Koshut prince, who migrated from Dzungaria to Volga around 1646.²⁰³ With him, he led 3.000 Oirat Koshut households to the Caspian Sea.²⁰⁴ These households then became part of the rest of the Oirat tribes which settled at the Caspian Steppe, by the name of Kalmyks.²⁰⁵ Kondolong Ubashi is mostly referred as the brother of Güshi Khan, chief of Khoshut Oirats in Zhungaria from 1642-1655.²⁰⁶ If Kondolong's name was saved in the local tradition of the Kalmyks on the Volga, Kalmyks could have used his name to refer to Dzungar Oirats since Kondolong came from Dzungaria and helped the establishment of the Kalmyks in Volga. The proximity of Kalmyks to Russian trade cities make them a possible source of Vatatzis, who lived there for long periods of time.

This ethnonym requires further linguistic tracing. At the same time, it supports the argument that Vatatzis gathered information about these nations through intermediaries. The life of Vasileios Vatatzis was carefully examined in the first chapter of this dissertation and it became clear that he did not reach Dzungaria himself. He never visited the places where the Dzungar Oirats lived, so he did not obtain first-hand knowledge about this nation. He must have been informed about them through a series of other people.

Dzungar Oirats, the safest assumption behind Kondosēdes

Kondosēdes are Oirats, and according to the *Map of Central Asia*, they can be identified as the Dzungar Khanate.²⁰⁷ Vatatzis insists that they are almost identical to Kalmyks. He clearly states it in II/259, while in his other works he associates them with Kalmyks by using alternative names. In the *Map of Central Asia*, he writes that this nation is also given

203 Christopher Atwood, "Khoshuts," *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongolian Empire*, (New York: Facts On File, 2004).

204 Atwood, "Kalmyks".

205 Atwood, "Khoshuts".

206 Christopher Atwood, "Güshii Khan," *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongolian Empire*, (New York: Facts On File, 2004).

207 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 28 ; Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 53

the came Karakalmyks, which means Black Kalmyks.²⁰⁸ In *Persica* he uses the names ‘Kalmyk or Manzouroi’ for the same nation.²⁰⁹

As it became clear in the section on Kalmyks, Oirats in the Volga region who took the name Kalmyks and Oirats in Dzungaria are essentially the same people, sharing migrating flows back and forth. The most significant migrating flows between them are the settlement of Kalmyks and the flight of Kalmyks in 1771 as stated previously. Vatatzis is right when he calls these nations as one. Oirats have a distinct identity when it comes to their ancestry claims, administration system, and language. Vatatzis avoids a definition of what constitutes these nations in terms of tribes, clans, or regions. Perhaps his insight was not clear enough to be specific, or he wanted to focus on other aspects, such as religion, which he found more interesting.

Textual analysis

The author underlines the power of the Oirat ruler on his people, noting that his orders are never questioned. Overall, he paints a harsh picture of the Oirat administration structure and their lifestyle, while he compliments their military prowess.

In line II/267 it is stated that Kondosēdes overthrew the Chinese kings when China was divided. This is a reference to an earlier historical period in 13th century, the groundbreaking Mongol conquest of China.²¹⁰ Vatatzis uses the term ‘Kitaion’ as the secondary name of China, which derives from the works of Marco Polo.²¹¹

An important question arises here, if Oirat history should be fitted with Mongol history. Vatatzis mentions the conquest of China led by Genghis Khan and Kublai Khan which is a typical Mongolian part of history.²¹² The schism between Oirats and Mongols has a defining point in the feud between Kublai Khan and his brother Ariq, which found Oirats on the losing side, but joining Kublai Khan’s forces nonetheless.²¹³ The Oirat and Mongol histories can in some contexts be seen as distinct, and in other contexts as one. Here, it is coherent that the author connects the two nations.²¹⁴

208 Κορδῶσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 27

209 Sariyannis, “An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek’s Travel Account in Central Asia,” 53

210 Κορδῶσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 29

211 Κορδῶσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 27

212 *Ibidem*.

213 Christopher Atwood, “Oirats” *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongolian Empire*, (New York: Facts On File, 2004).

214 Κορδῶσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 29

The author criticizes Dalai Lama's cult with a tone ranging from witty to insulting. It should be reminded that Vatatzis did not in fact see the Buddhist customs first-hand, he is merely sharing what he has heard about them. His stance on Buddhism should be compared with his stance on Persia. This country had an entirely different culture than his own, but he had the chance to experience it, and ended up sharing his admiration and deep respect openly.

Also, the policy of his publisher is noteworthy. Legrand has already been introduced in the section of the *Voyages*' publication, in the chapter of Vatatzis' oeuvre. Legrand refused to include the translation of the part referring to Dalai Lama, while preserving the complete original text in Greek.²¹⁵ One could argue this choice was made out of respect of belief. Vatatzis wrote in the first half of 18th century while Legrand published the book of *Voyages* in 1886. Roughly 150 years elapse between the two men, in which political thought accelerated.

In line II/ 307 Vatatzis mentions Mantzēdes as the second hierarchical position after Dalai Lama. There are two possibilities to approach what Vatatzis could have meant with the term Mantzēdes (Μαντζήδες). The ending -ēdes is a common Greek ending so it should be omitted. The sound of the word resembles 'Manchu' and 'Manjushri'.

Probably it denotes the Manchu dynasty. The Jurchen clan officially acquired the name 'Manchu' in 1636 under the reign of Hong Taiji.²¹⁶ He was the second Manchu ruler of China after the fall of the Ming dynasty. In 1727 Manchu emissaries were appointed to govern Tibet alongside with Dalai Lama.²¹⁷ This matches the authors' writings, where it is stated that Mantz[ēdes] are close to Dalai Lama and they work together. In this case, the author would mean that the secular and the religious powers are complementary.

Another, less plausible explanation, is the word 'Manjushri'. 'Manjushri' is a deity in Buddhism, form of Buddha or Bodhisattva.²¹⁸ In fact, the Qing dynasty utilized this notion when they invented Qing Buddhism. In some instances, the Qing emperor was

215 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 54; Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, 213.

216 John Powers and David Templeman, *Historical Dictionary of Tibet*, s.v. 'Qing Dynasty' (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012).

217 John Powers and David Templeman, *Historical Dictionary of Tibet*, s.v. 'Qing Dynasty' (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012).

218 Shakur Lama, "The Last Attempt to Build the Buddhist State" in *Buddhism in Mongolian History, Culture, and Society* ed. Vesna Wallace (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 46.

considered an embodiment of Bodhisattva, was worshipped as such, and was addressed as Manjushri. In this case, the author would mean that Mantzēdes were part of the cult as sacred.²¹⁹

Buddhism

A brief history of Buddhism in the Oirat people is presented here. Although the Mongol empire practiced freedom of religion, the Mongol and Oirat cultures are closely related to Buddhism. Mongols converted to Buddhism while keeping their shaman traditions and practices.²²⁰

In 1578 some members of Oirat tribes travelled willingly to hear the teachings of the third Dalai Lama.²²¹ On a larger scale, Oirats turned to Buddhism in 1616, when many young people stemming from aristocratic families went to Tibetan monasteries to study and live as monks.²²²

The steppe landscape shaped the Mongol spirituality which combined the Buddhist teaching with traditional local shaman practices. As a result, Buddhist religious rituals included the worship of nature. The worshiped places or animals were often endangered, and religion protected them. This should be seen as an approach to sustain nature.²²³

Oirats' shift to Buddhism had political undertones. In the late sixteenth century the Mongol rule was decentralized, while Dalai Lama provided legitimization of power.²²⁴ It was apparent that Buddhism suited Oirats, who had a distinct method of administration which disregarded the hereditary claims to the Oirat throne.²²⁵ This way they valued external approval for the title of khan, namely Dalai Lama selected him.²²⁶ This lasted

219 Elverskog, *Our Great Qing*, 155.

220 Vesna A. Wallace, "Buddhist Sacred Mountains, Auspicious Landscapes, and Their Agency" in *Buddhism in Mongolian History, Culture, and Society* ed. Vesna Wallace (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 222.

221 Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State", 26.

222 Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State", 28.

223 Wallace, "Buddhist Sacred Mountains, Auspicious Landscapes, and Their Agency", 222.

224 Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State", 26.

225 Atwood, 'Oirats'.

226 Atwood, 'Oirats'.

until the mid-18th century when Oirats lost their autonomy.²²⁷ Subsequently their khan has to be accepted by the Qing or Russian Empire.²²⁸

The creation of Western Mongol script in 1648 is a landmark in the influence of Buddhism in Mongols.²²⁹ Rulers funded the translation of Buddhist text and the production of copies.²³⁰ Young Oirat nobles received intensive education in Tibetan monastic colleges.²³¹

Even after the Oirat lost autonomy, and the Qing empire conquered Dzungaria, their devotion to Buddhism remained. In fact, the Qing empire heavily promoted the Buddhist Qing religion and utilized the Mongol belief in Buddhism to sustain peace.²³² Gelugspa Buddhism gradually dominated Mongol-Oirat culture, discouraged local beliefs and centralized religion.²³³ Also, it gave legitimacy to the Qing rule, as well as the local rulers in Mongolia.²³⁴

Zophēdes

The ethnonym Zophēdes has not yet been traced.²³⁵ A potential etymology of the ethnonym will be given in the first section after the translation of the verses concerning this nation. According to Vatatzis, this nation is culturally identical to Kondosēdes. There is lack of information to identify this nation to a specific tribe, but the most consistent hypothesis so far leads to Khoshut Oirats.²³⁶

Translation .

Voyages part II/ 321 - 330

In a place far away to the east of Kondosēdes
once again a nomadic nation lies in this plain;
it is called tribe of Azoph, no difference

227 Atwood, 'Oirats'.

228 Atwood, 'Oirats'.

229 Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State", 26.

230 Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State", 25.

231 Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State", 33.

232 Johan Elverskog, *Our Great Qing: The Mongols, Buddhism, and the State in Late Imperial China* (University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 118

233 Elverskog, *Our Great Qing*, 120.

234 Elverskog, *Our Great Qing*, 120.

235 Sariyannis, "An Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greek's Travel Account in Central Asia," 54.

236 Κορδῶσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 29.

do they have from Kondosēdes, the same applies to them;
 for they too, Zophēdes, say and go on and on,
 taking pride in their nation,
 saying that in the past they were blessed
 having Dalai Lama too and they worshipped him.
 Also it is known that close to Zophēdes grows
 rhubarb, the height of medicines.

Map of Central Asia. Zophēdes

Zophkhan, leader of a nation similar to Kondosēdes, they live in tents and lead a nomadic life. Rhubarb grows in their region and close to them Dalai Lama has been born, for this they say incredible things.

Khoshut Oirats, the best hypothesis behind Zophēdes

As attested in *Voyages*, Zophēdes dwell to the south of China and north of India, which corresponds to the cultural region of Tibet. Taking into consideration that Zophēdes are ‘identical in everything’ to Kondosēdes, leads to the conclusion that they are an Oirat tribe living in the area of Tibet. The main possibilities are either Khoshut Oirats, on the rival confederation of the time, Kalkha Mongols, otherwise known as Eastern Mongols.²³⁷

The best hypothesis behind Zophēdes is Khoshut Oirats. A Khoshut Oirat leader who immensely supported a specific Buddhist sect ended up ruling Tibet and established it as a Khanate. The leader is named Güshi Khan and the state he established may be the nation mentioned in *Voyages* as Zophēdes.²³⁸ It lasted from 1642 to 1717.²³⁹

The main argument supporting that Zophēdes could be Khoshut Oirats is that Khoshut Oirats were the firmest supporters of Dalai Lama at the time, and that Vatatzis presents the following of Dalai Lama as the main characteristic of Zophēdes and Kondosēdes. The culture of these two nations is attested as identical, so the only clue to differentiate between them is their location. Location is the only reason why Kondosēdes

237 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 29.

238 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 30.

239 Atwood, “Rulers and Leaders of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire”.

are recognized as the Dzungar Khanate and Zophēdes as kely the Khoshut Oirats in Tibet, and not vice versa.

It should be added here that Oirats divided their domain into two distinct areas, so they named Tibet 'Right Wing' as opposed to the 'Left Wing' of their territory, Dzungaria.²⁴⁰ This separation reinforces the idea that these wings could correspond to Khoshut and Dzungar Oirats respectively, because it explains why Vatatzis used two ethnonyms for two nations he claims to be 'identical in everything'.

Zophēdes could derive from the term зөв (zöv) which means right in Mongolian.²⁴¹ In this case, 'right' could correspond to the Right Wing of the Oirats which at the time was Tibet, hence further supporting the argument that Zophēdes are indeed Khoshut Oirats.

The reincarnations leading to the unique Dalai Lama of non-Tibetan origin.

The history of Tibetan Buddhist monks exerting influence on political figures goes way back. An early example in Mongol history is the cooperation between Kublai Khan and Phagpa.²⁴² In 1254 Kublai Khan became a patron of Buddhism and Phagpa became his religious teacher and advisor.²⁴³ They acknowledged the complimentary roles of religious and secular power with the system Cho-Yon.²⁴⁴ This relationship was idealized in the following centuries.²⁴⁵

The universalist nature of Buddhism suited Mongols, who could utilize it to unite the multicultural societies they conquered, and to suppress local religions who were often tied to local nobility.²⁴⁶ Altan Khan (1508–1582) was another central figure in Tibetan political since he launched the Mongols' second conversion to Buddhism.²⁴⁷ Altan Khan met Sonam Gyatso in 1578 on his own initiative, while holding indisputable political and

240 Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State," 29.

241 *Mongolian - English dictionary*, ed. Charles Bawden, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2010), s.v. "зөв".

242 Warren Smith, *Tibetan Nation: A History Of Tibetan Nationalism And Sino-tibetan Relations* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), 88.

243 *Ibidem*.

244 *Ibidem*.

245 *Idem*, 89.

246 *Idem*, 99.

247 Atwood, "Altan Khan"..

financial power.²⁴⁸ They followed the idealized example of Kublai Khan and Phagpa. In this meeting, Altan Khan was named a reincarnation of Kublai Khan, thus gaining a claim in Chingghisid lineage.²⁴⁹ Sonam Gyatso acquired the name of Dalai Lama; the first living man to attain it. He was named the third Dalai Lama, reincarnating the previous two.²⁵⁰ Here Vatatzis' commentary on mutually beneficial praises becomes relevant.

Interestingly, the reincarnation of Sonam Gyatso was found in Altan Khan's great grandson,²⁵¹ Yonten Gyatso.²⁵² So the grandson of Altan Khan became the fourth Dalai Lama.²⁵³ Tibetans were negatively predisposed against Mongols and initially doubted this recognition, until Tibetan monks assessed the boy and confirmed him as Fourth Dalai Lama.²⁵⁴

It is probably this Dalai Lama that Vatatzis recalls as being born near Zophēdes in line II/ 328.²⁵⁵ Consequently, the time to which the author refers is 1589 and the region is Inner Mongolia. The pride to which the author refers in II/345-347, "taking pride in their nation, saying that in the past they were blessed having Dalai Lama too" derives from the exceptional event that the Fourth Dalai Lama is the only Lama of non-Tibetan origin.²⁵⁶

The road to the establishment of a Tibetan Khanate

The tensions caused by the powerful Mongol presence in Tibet skyrocketed after the death of Fourth Dalai Lama in 1617. Yellow Hat (Gelug) monks were vulnerable to large scale deadly attacks.²⁵⁷ A political leader from Shigatse, named Karma Phuntsok Namgyal, ordered the attacks.²⁵⁸ In 1618 'the hills around Lhasa were littered with dead Gelug monks.'²⁵⁹ In 1634 various exiled Mongol groups formed an army of 10.000 people aiming to complete the destruction of the Yellow Hat sect in Central Tibet.²⁶⁰

248 Smith, *Tibetan Nation*, 106.

249 *Ibidem*.

250 *Ibidem*.

251 *Ibidem*.

252 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 30.

253 Smith, *Tibetan Nation*, 106.

254 Atwood, 'Dalai Lama, fourth'.

255 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 30.

256 Atwood, 'Dalai Lama, fourth'.

257 Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State," 28.

258 *Ibidem*

259 *Ibidem*.

260 *Ibidem*.

The Tibetan regent sought military protection from the Oirats.²⁶¹ Güshi rushed to protect the school of Yellow Hat. He met with the army leader of the enemy and convinced him to call off the attack and converted him to a follower of Dalai Lama.²⁶² In 1637 Güshi Khan attacked and prevailed over the remaining enemies.

For three years, from 1639 to 1642, Güshi Khan would seek and methodically destroy the Fifth Dalai Lama's enemies.²⁶³ The Fifth Dalai Lama named him 'Religious King and Defender of Buddhism'.²⁶⁴ In 1642 he proclaimed him Khan of Tibet.²⁶⁵

Turkic Muslim People of Central Asia

Karakalpaks

Translation

Voyages II/ 143 - 154

After everything I said about the Kalmyk nations,
in a place far away from them, to their east,
[lies] another nomadic quite populous nation,
warlike and marauding, all too familiar with banditry,
stemming from the race known as Scythian,
bearing the name Karakalpaks.
Little do they know about religion, [they believe in] none other than
the one whose prophet is Muhammad;
from this tribe, someone is elected by the people
not among the common people, but among those called Mirza,
whoever is voted among them, he rules,
he almost reigns over this nation.

²⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

²⁶² *Ibidem*.

²⁶³ Atwood, "Güshii Khan".

²⁶⁴ Taupier, "The Western Mongolian Clear Script and the Making of a Buddhist State," 28.

²⁶⁵ Atwood, "Güshii Khan".

Etymology of the ethnonym

The ethnonym Karakalpaks first appears in 16th century.²⁶⁶ Its connotation, Black hats (Qara qalpaqs), is a typical characterization for peoples of the region.²⁶⁷ It has been used by Herodotus, who called Μελαγχλαίνων (Black Hats) a people in Scythia.²⁶⁸ Therefore, due to the overuse of the word it remains vague if this nation should be identified with any previous one.²⁶⁹

Karakalpaks in 18th century.

Around 1700 the Karakalpaks became vassals of Kazakhs.²⁷⁰ They are described in the *Voyages* as a nomadic nation, however at the beginning of the 18th century they had already been, at least partially, sedentary.²⁷¹ They paid an annual tribute in grain to the Kazakhs, which would not be implemented had they been purely nomadic.²⁷² Overall, their economy subsisted on cattle-breeding, agriculture, and fishing.²⁷³

By the middle of 18th century, facing pressure from Kazakhs and Dzungars, they relocated in the Khivan Khanate. Karakalpaks had the tendency to assimilate into other Turkic nations, especially those in Bukhara, Fargana, and Samarkand.²⁷⁴ Amid the power fluidity of Chorasnia, the Karakalpaks were an important power in the region, and their elite played an important political role.²⁷⁵

Finally, as Vatatzis wrote, the language of Karakalpaks is indeed very similar to the Khazakh language. They can also be considered as one single language with two dialects.²⁷⁶

266 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 23

267 *Ibidem*.

268 *Ibidem* ; Herodotus, *Histories*, Hdt. 4.102.2. Digital version in Perseus Digital Library online: A.D. Godley (ed.), Herodotus, Loeb Classical Library, London; New York, 1921. <http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0016.tlg001.perseus-grc1:4.102.2>

269 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 23.

270 Peter Golden, *Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples: Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia and the Middle East* (Wiesbaden, 1992), 403.

271 *Ibidem*.

272 *Idem*, 404.

273 Andreas Wilde and Nigora Allaeva, "Lost in Khvārazm. On the Interdependence of Power and Conflict in the Example of Nādir Shāh's Khīva Campaign(s)," *Central Asiatic Journal* 59, no. 1–2 (2016): 81, <https://doi.org/10.13173/centasiaj.59.1-2.0077>.

274 Golden, *Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 404.

275 Wilde and Allaeva, "Lost in Khvārazm," 97.

276 Golden, *Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 404.

Kazakhs

In the early eighteenth century the Kazakh nation was a vital agent of Asian trade routes.²⁷⁷ This gave them an excessive bargaining leverage against the Russian and Qing empires. In both cases, the Kazakhs could trade with significant privileges.²⁷⁸ However, by the middle of the century many Kazakh tribes fell under Oirat rule or peacefully accepted the Russian rule.²⁷⁹

Translation

Voyages II/ - 166

To the east of this nation and nearby,
another nation dwells, identical to the aforementioned one,
they share the same language and religion,
same procedure or electing the ruler,
it is the nation of Kazakhs
which is always on peaceful terms with the Karakalpaks.
Many consider these two nations as one;
they call them jointly as Kyrgyz.
It would be wise to associate these nations
the Jaxartes, Tokhars, and Saka;
because they do not move far away from that sea
Called the Aral, where Jaxartes [flows] too;

Map of Central Asia

Kazakhs, another nation which follows Muslim faith, similar to the Karakalpaks, with whom they are on friendly terms, and provide military support to each other. However, Kazaks are far more populous, and more prone to war until now, they even recruit women if needed, who go to war armed just like men. During the war in Bukhara (I happened to be there), I saw two of those armed women, during the turmoil of war, who

²⁷⁷ Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 198

²⁷⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁷⁹ *Ibidem*.

were captured amid other warriors, and were brought in the city (with no compassion) they were killed ruthlessly and mercilessly.

Etymology of the ethnonym

Their name derives from the word qazaqs which means freebooters, with the Russian pronunciation Kazakhs becoming more common.²⁸⁰ When Kazakh people acquired this name, they were located in the modern borders between Xinjiang and Kazakhstan. Subsequently the word origin Kazakh produced the name Cossack.²⁸¹ The characterization freebooters hints to the snatching activities, in other words the tactic of stealing goods from foreign lands.

Early history of Kazakhs, from 1377 to 1650

In 1377 the descendants of Toqa-Temür seized the power of the Blue Horde under the rule of Urus Khan in modern day Kazakhstan. However, in the middle of 15th century Uzbeks, namely the Shaybanid dynasty which was hostile towards Toqa-Temür's descendants, forced Kazakhs away from their lands to an eastern direction. In 1511–1521, under Qasim (Kasym) Khan, the Kazakhs reclaimed power and pushed away Uzbeks and the rulers of Mongolistan. They both fled southwards, to city-oases Transoxiana (Mawarannahr) and Tarim basin.²⁸²

The rivalry between Kazakhs and Oirats

Since their early formation, the Kazakh people had to face the Oirats in the eastern part of their territory. Kazakhs called the Oirats 'Kalmyks', same as the rest of the Turkic people.²⁸³ During the 16th century Kazakhs drove Oirats northwards, towards south Siberia.²⁸⁴

The dynamic changed in 17th century when Oirats occupied Dzungaria and the Ili Valley and attacked Kazakhs. Two Oirat Khans caused the Kazakhs a great deal of damage during their time, to the point that they brought on the collapse of the Kazakh

²⁸⁰ Atwood, "Kazakhs".

²⁸¹ Atwood, "Kazakhs".

²⁸² Atwood, "Kazakhs".

²⁸³ Atwood, "Kazakhs".

²⁸⁴ *Ibidem*.

confederation. These Oirat Khans were Tsewang Rabtan Khungtaiji, who reigned from 1694 to 1727 and Galdan-Tseren who reigned from 1727 to 1745.²⁸⁵

The mass forced migration which followed in 1723-1725, would later be commemorated in Kazakh tradition as 'the Barefoot Flight'²⁸⁶ or 'Barefoot Retreat'.²⁸⁷ They moved north and west, and got divided into three separate *zhüz*, which literally means units of one hundred. The Great Zhüz dwelled in Eastern and Southeastern Kazakhstan, the Middle Zhüz dwelled in Northern, Central, Southern Kazakhstan, and the Lesser Zhüz in Western.²⁸⁸

Vatatzis travels to Central Asia only three years after this devastating event for the Kazakhs but it is not clearly mentioned in *Voyages*. This could be explained by the fact that there were some instances of Kazakh tribes who would hold their ground, such as the Lesser Zhü under Abulkhair khan (reigned 1710–1748).²⁸⁹ So, it is possible that Vatatzis was partially informed about groups of Kazakhs who remained intact.

However, there is a mention of the Dzungar conquest. In the *Map of Central Asia*. There, the Kyrgyz nation is depicted and also it is explained that Kyrgyz were under the Qondos rule.²⁹⁰ As it has been supported in the respective chapter of this dissertation, the Qondos were the Dzungar Oirats. Also, in *Voyages* II/162 it is mentioned that Kyrgyz are according to the author almost identical to Kazakhs. Considering the above, it is probable that in the *Map of Central Asia* Vatatzis is referring to the Dzungar invasion of 1723-1725 against Kazakhs.

Kazakhs and Kyrgyz were deeply influenced by the wars with Oirats in terms of identity. In 14th century Kazakhs adopted the Muslim faith. On the other hand, Oirats embraced an ascetic order of Buddhism, a form which was first introduced in Tibet. The clash of beliefs deepened the mutual aversion. Conflicts were not a mere competition for animals and territory anymore, they came to resemble religious wars against the non-

²⁸⁵ *Ibidem*

²⁸⁶ *Ibidem*

²⁸⁷ Noda, *The Kazakh Khanates Between the Russian and Qing Empire*, 55.

²⁸⁸ Atwood, "Kazakhs".

²⁸⁹ Noda, *The Kazakh Khanates Between the Russian and Qing Empire*, 55.

²⁹⁰ Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 25.

believers. In Kazakh and Kyrgyz oral literature, epic poems celebrate the achievements of a hero.²⁹¹ The enemy of this hero is always mentioned to be a Kalmyk or an Oirat.²⁹²

It seems that Vatatzis had a good grasp of alliances and hostilities among the peoples of Central Asia, since he correctly divided the two main forces: Oirats and Kalmyks on the one hand, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, and Karakalpaks on the other.

Assessing Vatatzis' account on Kazakhs.

In *Voyages*, Kazakhs are presented as nomadic, which is true. Kazakh people were nomadic, while their Khans became accustomed to staying in important trade cities alongside the river Syr Daria.²⁹³

Thanks to the importance of their trade, Kazakhs gained tax exemptions in the Russian empire, securing a better position than Russian traders themselves.²⁹⁴ Peter the Great characterized the Khazakhs as 'the key and gate for all of Asia'.²⁹⁵ However, the military strength of Russian empire had such an increase that Kazakhs had no other option but to accept the Russian rule over them in 1731.²⁹⁶ In some cases, Kazakhs approached Russia themselves to seek protection from other tribes.²⁹⁷

It should be noted that Vatatzis travels there only a few years before the Kazakh land becomes part of the Russian empire, which is probably why he does not mention the Russian rule. However, he does mention the Kazakh siege of Bukhara in 1727 which was terminated without a conquest, an event which indeed unraveled accordingly.²⁹⁸

The Kazakhs adopted Islam gradually, from the Chinghisid era to the Sufis of fifteenth and sixteenth century.²⁹⁹ It is safe to consider the Muslim faith a part of the Kazakh identity,³⁰⁰ which confirms Vatatzis' take.

One of the most compelling demonstrations of Kazakh lifestyle in the *Voyages* is the participation of women in war. It is attested that whenever it is needed, armed

291 Atwood, "Kazakhs".

292 *Ibidem*.

293 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 197

294 *Idem*, 198.

295 *Ibidem*.

296 *Idem*, 199.

297 Noda, *The Kazakh Khanates Between the Russian and Qing Empire*, 55.

298 Κορδώσης, *Διασχίζοντας την Κεντρική Ασία*, 24.

299 Golden, *Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 402.

300 *Ibidem*.

women join the Kazakh army in war and fight next to men. The author witnessed two armed women who fought next to men being captured in Bukhara. The author expresses his surprise when they were murdered.³⁰¹

Not only is this testimony rare as a finding that concerns women's lives in this historical context, but it is also contradictory to the hints about Kazakh women that are already available. The Russian historiography which has dealt with Kazakh marriages within the Russian empire testifies that Kazakh women were forced to marry with no say.³⁰² Instead, it is said that women were dealt with as property of their father, and it was the Orthodox church who opposed and indicated the necessity of free will in the choice of husband.³⁰³

The contradiction lies in the social norm that if a culture sees women potentially able to fight next to men, it probably sees women able to select a husband too. The *Voyages* are earlier than the Russian accounts. Could this mean that there was a shift in women's role meanwhile? If so, could it be connected to the increasing Kazakh adoption of the Muslim faith as it was preached to them by Tatar and Uzbek merchants during the Russian Imperial period?³⁰⁴ This is an interesting topic, worthy of shedding light on, but it would need further research.

In any case, Vatatzis' account in this point is important for two reasons. First, because the sources concerning whether women joined the army are scarce. Second, because there is dearth of reliable sources about women's status in 18th century Central Asia altogether. A potential Kazakh practice of women warriors may influence the perception of women in Kazakh society. In conclusion, Vatatzis' portrayal of Kazakh nation is probably quite accurate.

Turkmens

Translation

Voyages II/ 107 - 138

301 Vatatzis, *Voyages de Basile Vatace en Europe et en Asie*, 296.

302 Robert D. Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009), 230.

303 *Ibidem*.

304 Golden, *Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 402.

To the south a nation dwells on its own,
Divided, nonetheless, in many tribes;
it is of the Turkmens, as they are called,
they all follow the Muslim faith;
according to the old historians, I say, they
are certainly the Huns, to which I agree;
an extremely warlike tribe, remarkable in horse riding,
able to withstand thirst, hunger, and heat.
I will describe clearly where they live,
so that the reader understands better.
From the Caspian Sea to the borders of Persia,
to the east, not far from India,
a large dessert is spread, whose width
would take a month to cross, or less in other places;
To its left, that is towards the north,
lies that vast plain I am talking about ,
followed by the kingdom of Khiva,
and further north is Bukhara.
These are located to the right and left of the sand,
But let's continue further on this desert;
scattered around this desert is
the nation of Turkmens, and it is divided
into many polities according to tribes and clans,
and they reside in appropriate places;
they subsist solely on banditry,
looting, and occasionally hunting.
On their right stretch the borders of Persia
they raid continuously, sometimes by stealth;
similarly, they raid the western borders of Persia
as well as those of Bukhara;
Shah Nader paid himself many Turkmens

to work for him and act on his orders.

Assessing Vatatzi's account on Turkmen.

The Turkmen are an interesting case of nomadic Central Asian people when it comes to their social structure. As D. Christian says (citing P. G. Geiss), they had quite an egalitarian approach, almost an absence of hierarchy, which was exceptional in Eurasia.³⁰⁵ In the *Voyages*, Vatatzi mentions that Nader Shah paid them to hire them as military. Although it is not apparent in the *Voyages*, this was actually an achievement on Nader Shah's part, since the payments of Turkmen were precisely equal.³⁰⁶ In other words, an external power could not bribe any Turkmen authority to achieve military alliance and no warriors were left without gain.

Turkmen's destructive role is also confirmed, especially against Khiva.³⁰⁷ However, it should be noted that the wider region in Chorasnia and Khivan Khanate was in a state of almost constant conflict, to the point that war became a normality.³⁰⁸

During the author's travelling in 1729, Nader Shah launched vigorous expeditions to control the area. He succeeded in being the most important and strongest agent so far, but other agents still played a role, among them the Turkmen and Karakalpaks.³⁰⁹

Bashkirs

Translation

Bashkirs, *Voyages II*/ 103 - 106

A nation called Bashkirs lies to the north [of Volga],
practices Muslim religion, and belongs to the Scythian tribe,
part of them is nomadic and part of them is sedentary,
it is located at the edges of the Russian empire as a subject nation.

305 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 201; Paul Georg Geiss, *Pre-Tsarist and Tsarist Central Asia: Communal Commitment and Political Order in Change*, Illustrated edition (London ; New York: Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2003), 100.

306 *Ibidem*.

307 *Ibidem*.

308 Wilde and Allaeva, "Lost in Khvārazm," 97.

309 *Ibidem*.

Assessing Vatatzis' account on Bashkirs.

The portrayal of Bashkirs in *Voyages* is short, yet accurate. Bashkirs were predominantly Muslims, Turkic-speaking, and lived on both sides of the Urals.³¹⁰ At the same time, they were diverse. The Bashkirs in the north were living in the forest, they worked as hunters, bee keepers, fishers, and fur makers, while several Fino-Hungarian speakers were among them.³¹¹ The Bashkirs in the south were pastoralists.³¹² Vatatzis does acknowledge their diversity, although only very basic information is given.

The Russian empire annexed the region around the Ural mountains during the decade 1730-1740, gaining valuable resources from a territory rich in farming lands, fur production, and minerals. For Bashkirs, the Russian annexation resulted to a rapid financial strain. The Orenburg line required funding, which increased taxation. This was accompanied by tax collectors who used harsh practices, such as keeping family members as hostages until the payment.³¹³ Although Vatatzis is travelling in 1727, three years before Russia annexes Bashkiria, he already mentions Bashkirs as a subject nation.

In 1734, facing the prospect of a stronger Russian military presence, the Bashkirs initiated a five-year rebellion.³¹⁴ In this war, Bashkirs were divided and fought in both sides.³¹⁵ In 1738 the war was practically over. Bashkirs were defeated, and several Bashkir villages were massacred.³¹⁶

Soon Bashkirs revolted once more, only two years after the end of the previous war. This time, the repercussions were worse. 107 villages were burned and a significant proportion of the Bashkir people died, whether in battle or from secondary consequences of war such as diseases and cold.³¹⁷

310 Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia*, 195.

311 *Ibidem*.

312 *Ibidem*.

313 *Ibidem*.

314 *Idem*, 197.

315 *Ibidem*.

316 *Ibidem*.

317 *Ibidem*.

Conclusions

In this dissertation the life and oeuvre of Vatatzis was presented. Frederic North, 5th Earl of Guilford was identified as one of the first owners of *Voyages*. *Voyages*, the Map of Central Asia, and *Persica* were presented in a consistent manner and *Voyages* was analysed further. A brief historical context of Inner Eurasia in 18th century was given, highlighting the expansionist tendencies of the Russian Empire, the Persian Empire, and the Qing Empire.

In the chapter on Oirats, the reciprocal relationship between the Kalmyks and the Russian Empire was explained. The enigmatic nations of Kondosēdes and Zophēdes were identified, heavily relying on the work of Dr. Stefanos Kordosis. A hypothesis about the etymology of Kondosēdes was argued, referring to Kondolong Ubashi. Kondolong was a Khoshut prince who lead a emigrational wave from Dzungaria at the mouth of the river Volga in the middle of 17th century, hence Kalmyks could have used his name to refer to the Dzungar Oirats around 1727, when Vatatzis was travelling in the region. The argument that Vatatzis collected information about the eastern nations through intermediaries was further supported by the limited extend of his travels and the use of Kalmyks, the westernmost Mongols, as an example to understand the more remote nations. An alternative hypothesis for the etymology of Kondosēdes, the Uzbek word Qondosh which means 'consanguinity' was provided and could further support Uzbek speaking intermediaries in Vatatzis' sources.

The description of Buddhism in *Voyages* was contextualized and the close interrelationship between Buddhism and Oirats was highlighted. The term Mantzēdes (Μαντζήδες), which is mentioned by Vatatzis as the second highest rank position after Dalai Lama in Buddhism, was explored. Two possible interpretations were given; it either denotes the Manchu emissaries that the Qing dynasty appointed to govern Tibet in 12727, or the Buddhist deity Manjushri' which is associated with Bodhisattva.

The second enigmatic nation in the *Voyages*, Zophēdes, were attested as a nation which took pride in having their own Dalai Lama. Based on Dr. Stefanos Kordosis the Dalai Lama in question was the Fourth Dalai Lama. In this dissertation the pride of the people was attributed to the fact that the Fourth Dalai Lama was the only one without a Tibetan

origin. The establishment of a Tibetan Khanate during 1642-1717 was narrated to demonstrate the reality of the Buddhist zeal that was attested by Vatatzis.

The author expressed an overall similarity between Kondosēdes and Zophēdes, which identification creates the necessity to find two identical nations that it would make sense to be named separately. At the time, Oirats indeed divided their territory into two distinct sections, Dzungaria and Tibet, and named them Left Wing and Right Wing respectively. This significantly matches the identification of the two nations. A possible etymology of the ethnonym Zophēdes has been suggested. In Mongolian *зөв* (*zöv*) means right, which corresponds to the Right Wing of Oirats, the Khoshut Tibetan Khanate. This could further support the identification of Zophedes as Khoshuds, Upper Mongols.

Moving on to Turkic peoples, Vatatzis witnessed two Kazakh women fighting against Bukhara; they were captured and then murdered as a punishment. The importance of this passage is highlighted in this dissertation, comparing it to the Russian historiography where Kazakh women were deemed as unable to consent to marriage. The idea whether this potential cultural shift was influenced by Muslim conversions led by Tatars and Uzbeks merchants in the Russian empire is raised as a question and suggested for further research. In any case, the proof of instances of female Kazakh warriors can improve our understanding of Kazakh women's lives in 18th century.

Vatatzis considers Kyrgyz as merely another name for Kazakhs, and for this reason the Kyrgyz are not examined separately here. In Map of Central Asia it is written that Kyrgyz were subjugated under Kondosēdes. This dissertation supports that the harsh Dzungar invasion of 1723-1725 against Kazakhs is reflected here. The acknowledgement of this war functions as an additional confirmation that Kondosēdes are Dzungar Oirats.

The chapter on Turkic peoples is completed with Karakalpaks, Turkmens, and Baskirs, who are mentioned in *Voyages* quite vaguely. The vital role of Turkmens in Central Asia during the first half of 18th century is confirmed and attributed to the constant instability. On the contrary, the limited role of Baskirs is confirmed, because of the violent repression they faced under the Russian empire.

Overall, Vatatzis excellently conveyed ideas that were commonly felt in his time, and he was able to put together informal sentiments with broad geopolitical aspects. This is clearly illustrated in his passage on Kalmyks. Formally, the Kalmyks and other similar

nomadic nations were under the Russian rule but in practice, Vatatzis says, they were autonomous and did not need anyone. Here he acknowledges the political situation while expressing the overall sentiment of his time. He understood the challenges of the Russian empire concerning nomads so clearly that he phrased them in a poetic way: 'How can one control those who move like clouds in the sky, like fish in the sea?'

The author is quite vague when describing the nomadic people, with scattered and occasionally misguided references to their history. Yet, he accurately associates them as hostile or ally groups. For example, he is correct in claiming that Kalmyks and Dzungars are identical. Although Kalmykia and Dzungaria are impressively far away, it was the same Oirat Mongol people who migrated back and forth during 17th-18th century. Still, his insight is more accurate around the Caspian Sea region, where he has travelled, and less accurate about the nations further east.

In conclusion, thanks to its immediacy the *Voyages* is a valuable primary historical source for Eurasian topics.

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Appendix I: The early modern Greek names of 50 Inner Eurasian cities

The city names that are mentioned in this dissertation are collected here in an effort to match the current city names in English to their historical counterparts in early modern Greek, as they were written by Vatatzis in the 18th century. The cities span from Eastern Europe to Central Asia.

	City	Early modern Greek name
1.	Kiev	Κιοβία

2.	Niznyh	Νίζνα
3.	Chernihiv	Τσερνίβοβο
4.	Pereiaslav	Περίασλοβο
5.	Borzna	Μποροζονού
6.	Sosnytsya	Σόσνιτζα
7.	Baturyn	Μπατούρνα
8.	Berezna	Μπερέζνα
9.	Pryluky	Περλούκα
10.	Glushkovo	Γλούχοβο
11.	Sevsk	Σεύκα
12.	Bolkhov	Πόλχοβο
13.	Belyov	Μπιλιόβα
14.	Kaluga	Καλούχα
15.	Kamianets-Podilskyi	Καμενίτζα
16.	Bucharest	Βουκουρέστι
17.	Veliko Tarnovo	Τύρνοβο
18.	Târgoviște	Τριγόβιστον
19.	Brașov	Πρασοβό
20.	Făgăraș	Φαγαράσι
21.	Bistrița	Μπίστριτζα
22.	Lviv	Λιόβι
23.	Lublin	Λιουμπλούνι
24.	Warsaw	Βαρσαβία
25.	Nizhny Novgorod	Νίζνα

26.	Saratov	Σαράτοβο
27.	Astrakhan	Αστραχάνι
28.	Iași	Ιάσιο
29.	Shamakhi	Σαμαχί
30.	Veliky Novgorod	Νοβογροδία
31.	St Petersburg	Πετρούπολη
32.	Isfahan	Σπαχάνι
33.	Rasht	Ρέστη
34.	Qazvin	Κασμπίν
35.	Qom	Κούμι
36.	Bandar Abbar	Μπεντέρ Απάς
37.	Gilan	Γκιλάνι
38.	Khiva	Χίβα
39.	Samarkand	Σαμαρκάνδη
40.	Bukhara	Βουχάρι
41.	Mashhad	Μασάτι
42.	Kalat Nader	Κελάτι
43.	Babarap	Μπαμπάρτ
44.	Sabzevar	Σανζαβάρ
45.	Neyshabur	Νισαβούρ
46.	Badakhshan	Μπεδεξάν
47.	Khodjand	Χοτζάνδ
48.	Kabul	Καμπίλ
49.	Turpan	Τουρφάν

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Kipchaks 634-636

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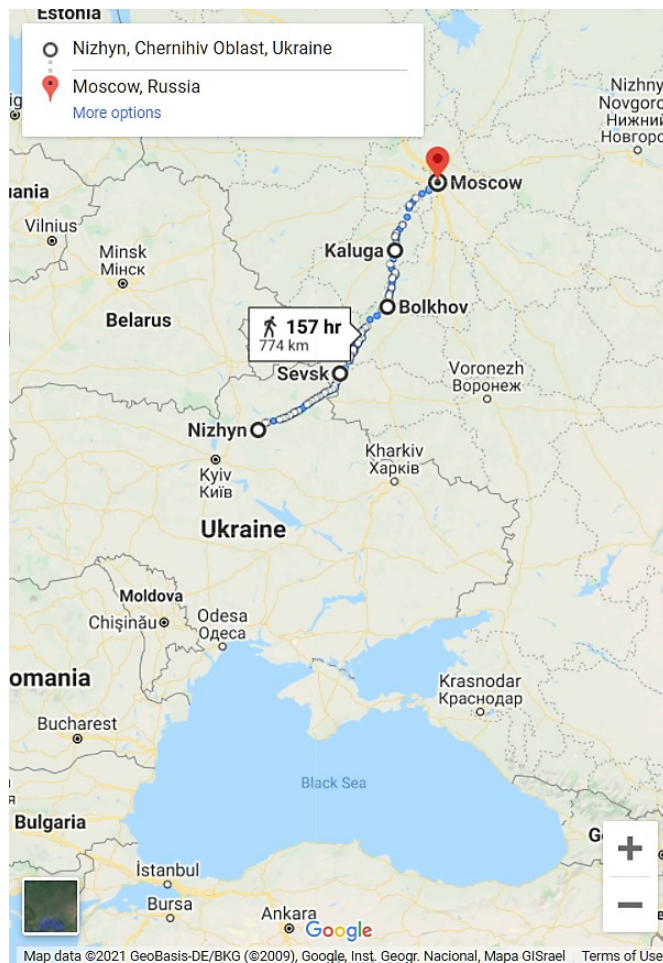
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Appendix III: Maps

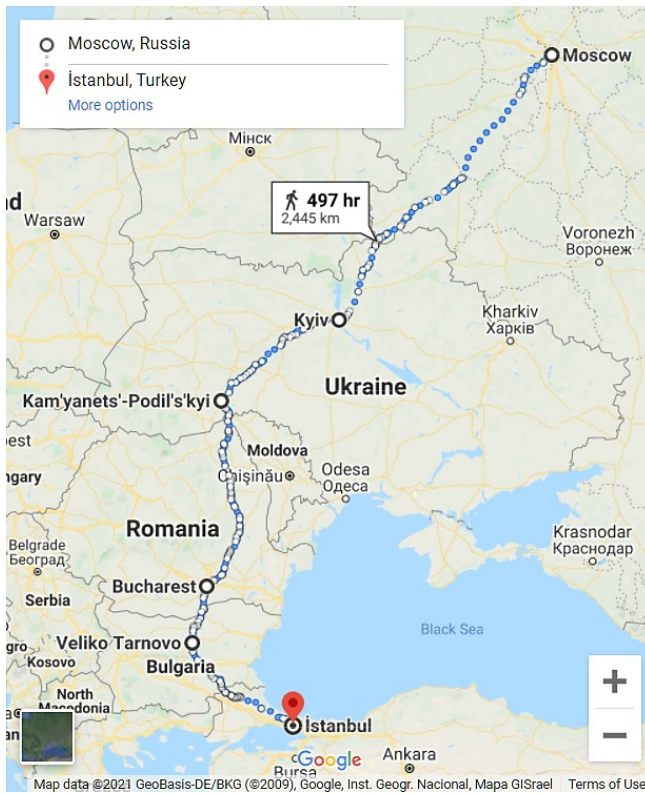
The maps are used to show the sequence of the visited towns, instead of the exact path. Each map is accompanied by a legend that mentions the sequence of the cities that Vatatzis visited. All routes between those landmarks were generated automatically by Google Maps and do not necessarily correspond to the exact path followed by Vatatzis.



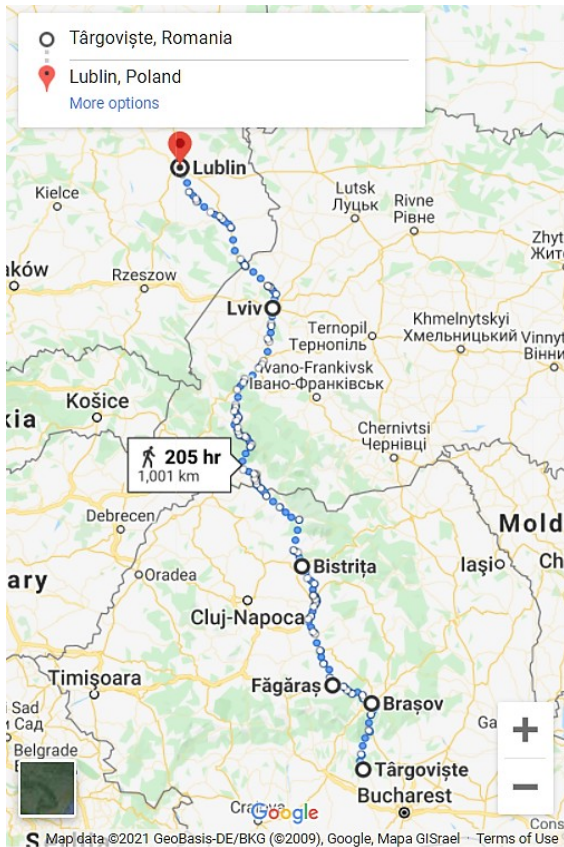
Map 1. Vatatzis travels from Nizhyn to Moscow around 1708.

Route: Nizhyn, Sevak, Bolkhov, Kaluga, Moscow. You can find an interactive version of the map at [Nizhyn, Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine to Moscow, Russia - Google Maps](#)³¹⁸

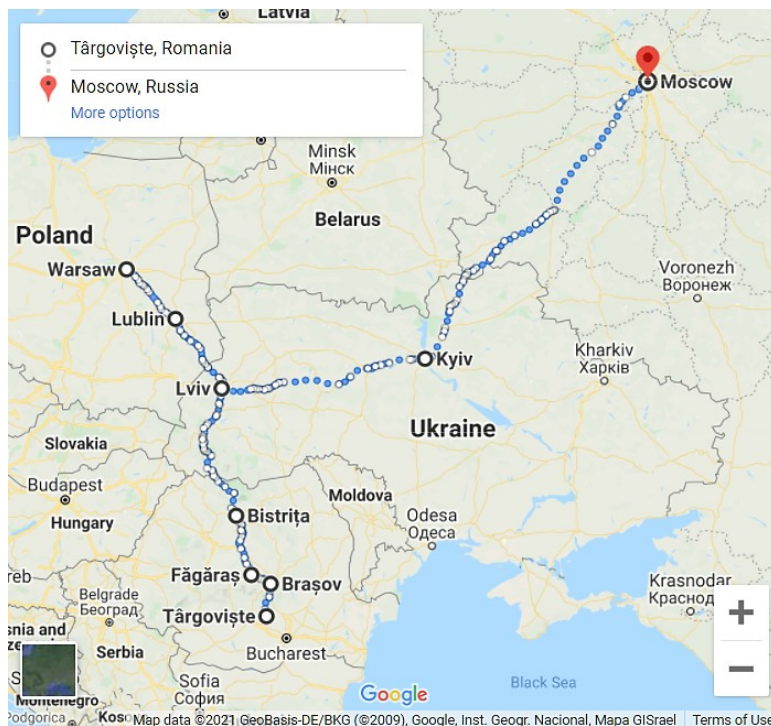
³¹⁸ In this dissertation the Maps are used to show the sequence of the visited towns, instead of the exact path. Each map is accompanied by a legend that mentions the sequence of the cities that Vatatzis visited. All routes between those landmarks were generated automatically by Google Maps and do not necessarily correspond to the exact path followed by Vatatzis.



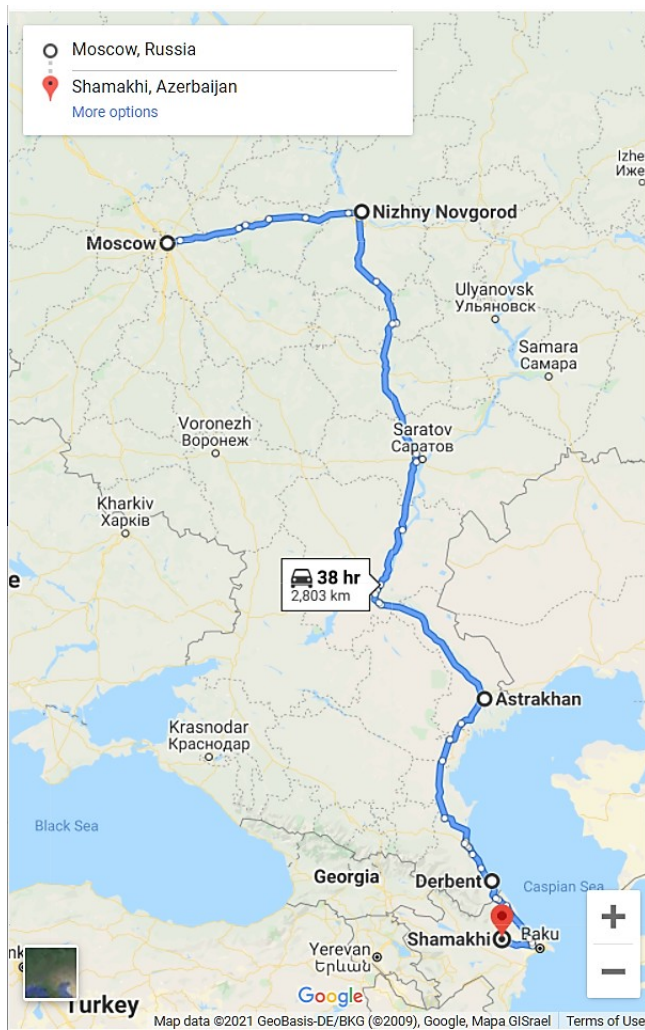
Map 2. Return from Moscow to Istanbul around 1711-1712. Route: Moscow, Kiev, Kamianets-Podil'skyi, Bucharest, Veliko Tarnovo, Istanbul. You can find an interactive version of the map at [Moscow, Russia to Istanbul, Turkey - Google Maps](#)



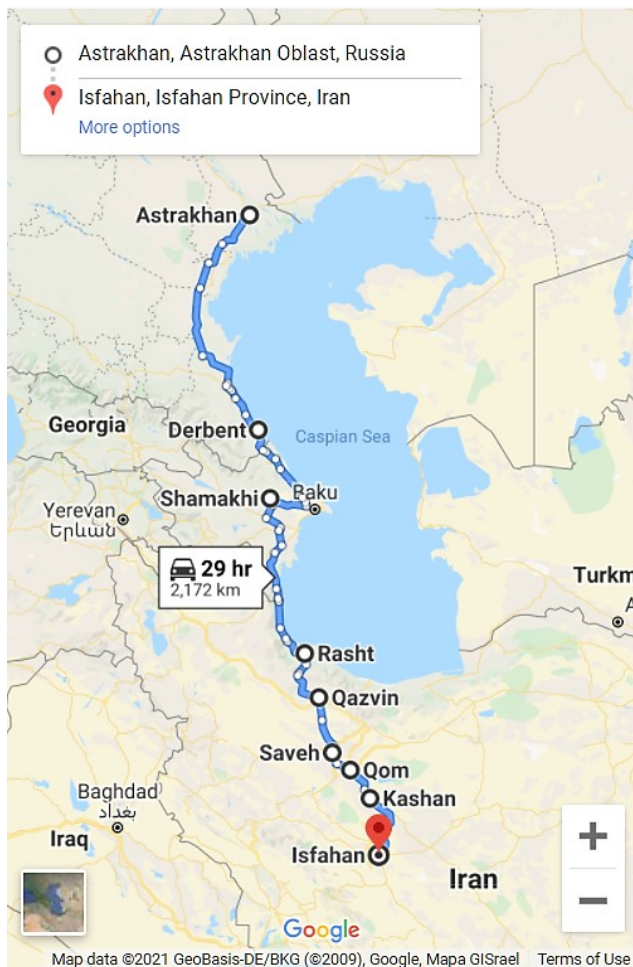
Map 3. Vatatzis travels from Romania to Poland around 1712. Route: Târgoviște, Brașov, Făgăraș, Bistrița, Lviv, Lublin. You can find an interactive version of the map at [Târgoviște, Romania to Lublin, Poland - Google Maps](#)



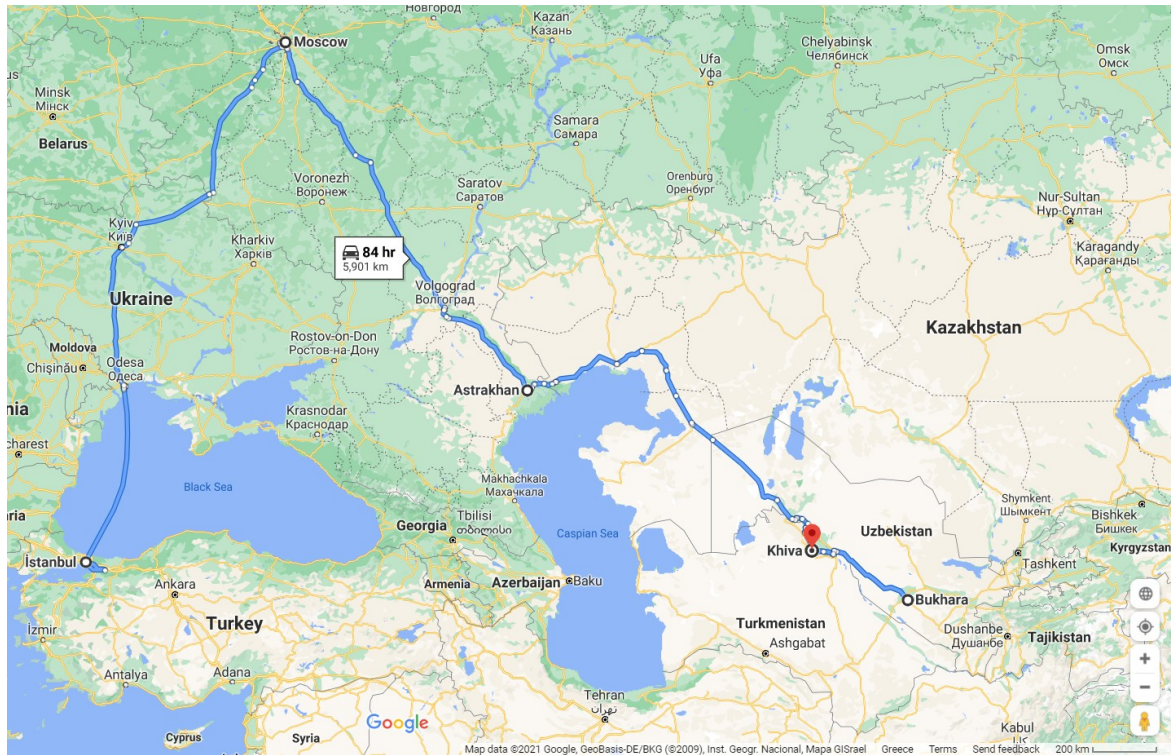
Map 4. Vatatzis travels from Poland to Moscow. Route: Warsaw, Lublin, Lviv, Kyiv, Moscow. You can find an interactive version of the map at [Târgoviște, Romania to Moscow, Russia - Google Maps](#)



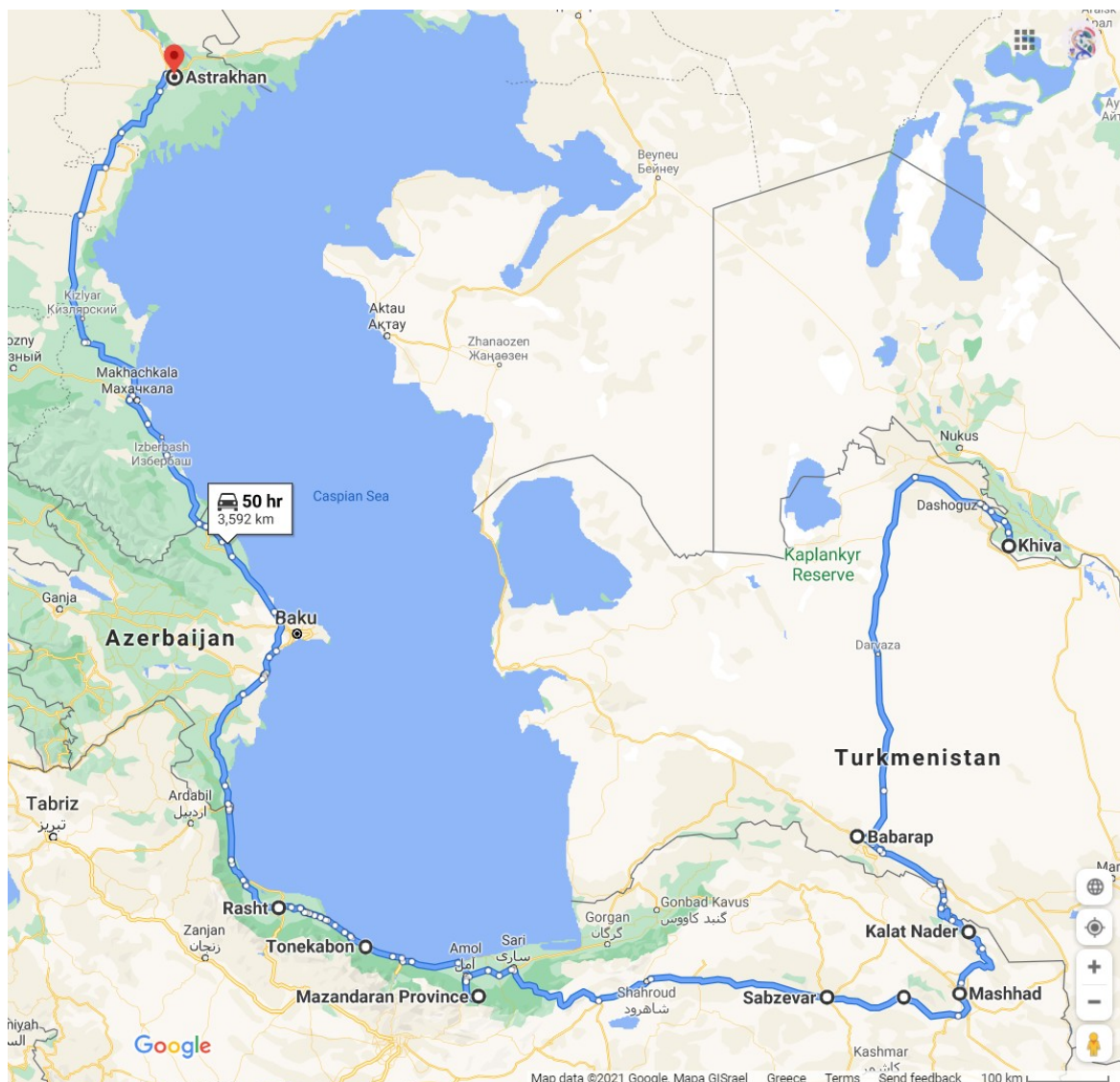
Map 5. Vatatzis' first travel to Persia. Route: Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, Saratov, Astrakhan, Derbent, Shamakhi. Please find an interactive version of the map at [Moscow, Russia to Shamakhi, Azerbaijan - Google Maps](#)



Map 6. In 1716 Vasileios Vatatzis explores Iran. Route: Astrakhan, Derbent, Shamakhi, Rasht, Qazvin, Saveh, Qom, Kashan, Isfahan. Please note that the route from Astrakhan to Derbent was undertaken by boat crossing through the Caspian Sea. You can find an interactive version of the map at: [Astrakhan, Russia to Isfahan, Isfahan Province, Iran - Google Maps](#)



Map 7. From Istanbul to Bukhara around 1727. Route: Istanbul, Moscow, Astrakhan, Khiva, Bukhara.



Map 8. Vatzis' return from Central Asia to Russia around 1728. Route: Khiva, Babarap, Kalat Nader, Mashhad, Sabzevar, Mazandaran Province, Tonekabon, Rasht, Astrakhan.

Appendix IV Line-by line-translation

A line by line translation is provided here to facilitate the understanding of the original text. This chapter includes the sum of translations from Greek to English that were analysed into the two previous chapters, concerning the nomadic peoples.

Voyages Part I/ 309 - 324, Kalmyks

Lin	Original Text	English Translation
e		
	Στὴν πεδιάν ποῦ φαίνεται μέσ' ἀπὸ τὸ ποτάμι	In the valley one can see from the river [Volga]
	Καλμοῦκοι κατοικοῦν 'ς αὐτήν, ἔχουν ὁμοῦ καὶ χάνην,	Kalmyks dwell, they also have a Khan,
	Ἀγιουκᾶν τὸν ὠνομάζασι, καὶ εἶχεν ἐξουσίαν	they call him Ayukan, and his authority
312	ἀπάνω 'ς ὅλους, 'ς αὐτουνοὺς εἶχε τὴν αὐθεντίαν.	is exercised over all people, as he rules over them.
	Καὶ πάντοτε τὴν ἄνοιξιν ἔρχονται εἰς τὰ χεῖλια	Every spring they approach the riverside
	τοῦ ποταμοῦ πολλὰ κοντὰ, διὰ νεροῦ τὴν χρεῖαν·	closely, in need of water;
	καὶ πάλιν μερικὲς φορές ποσῶς δὲν πλησιοῦνε,	sometimes they do not approach the riverside at all,
	μὰ εἰσὲ μέρη ἐσώτερα πᾶνε καὶ κατοικοῦνε,	instead, they head for the heartland and live there,
318	ἔχουν καὶ ζῶα πάμπολλα ὅποῦ ζωοτροφοῦνται.	they have a very large number of animals which graze there.
	Πρέπει κι αὐτὸ διὰ νὰ 'πω, νὰ ξεύρη ὅποιος διαβάζει,	I also have to say this, so that the reader know it,
	πῶς αὐτὴ ὅλη ἡ ξηρὰ χώραν δὲν ἀποτάζει·	all this dry land does not belong to any master;
	μέσ' ἀπὸ τὸ Σαράτοβον ἕως εἰς τὴν Κασπίαν	from within Saratov all the way to the Caspian Sea
	ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων τῶν μερῶν χώραν δὲ βρίσκεις μίαν·	in both riversides there is no city to be found;
	μόνον τὰ κάστρη μοναχὰ ὡς ἐφανερωσάμεν,	nothing but the forts we mentioned,
324	καὶ τοῦτα τελειόνοντας στ' Ἀστραχάνι	and when we passed them, we made it

ἔφθαζάμεν.

to Astrakhan.

Voyages Part II/ 65 - 97, Kalmyks

	Οὐ μακρὰ καὶ τῆς Βόλγας τε, τοῦ ρήθην ποταμίου,	Not far from Volga, the aforementioned river,
6	ἔθνος ποῖον νομαδικὸν καλούμενον	[there is a] nomadic nation called
6	Καλμοῦκοι,	Kalmyks,
	ἴσως οἱ Μασσαγέται εἶν' αὐτοὶ ἀσφαλῶς οὗτοι,	Perhaps this people are in fact the Massagetae ,
	πολύ τε κι ἀπειράνθρωπον πολεμιστῶν τῷ πλήθει·	they are numerous, countless warriors;
	ἵππους καὶ κτήνη ἄπειρα ἐξ ὅλου τοῦτο βρίθει·	they own countless horses and beasts;
	Νέμεται μὲν κατὰ καιρὸν πλησίον εἰς τὴν Βόλγα	Sometimes they dwell close to Volga
7	καὶ ἄλλοτε δ' ἀπέρχεται μακρὰ πρὸς	other times they distance themselves
2	τὰ ἑῷα·	away to the East;
	καὶ ἄρχεται ὑπ' ἀρχηγοῦ ἐκ φύλου τοῦ ἰδίου,	they are ruled by a chief from their own tribe,
	γένους κατὰ διαδοχὴν τοῦ Ἀῖουκᾶ ἐκείνου,	hereditary, from the family line of Ayuka,
	καὶ λόγῳ ὑποτάσσεται, ἀλλ' οὐ πράγματι ὅλως,	in theory it is subjugated, but in reality only partially,
	εἰς σκῆπτρον τὸ ῥωσσαϊκόν, ὡς ᾄδεται ὁ λόγος.	to the Russian scepter, as it is said.
	Θρησκείαν δὲ θρησκεύεται τὴν εἰδωλολατρείαν,	Religiously they believe in idolatry,
7	φέροντας εἰδῶλα πολλὰ ἐκεῖ στήν	carrying many idols there in the desert,
8	ἐρημίαν,	

	ἔχοντας καὶ κατ'έξοχῃν ὑπουργοὺς τῆς θρησκείας, μαντζῆδες οὓς καλέουσιν τῆς εἰδωλολατρείας· τὰ δ' αὐτῶν τῆς ζωοτροφῆς ξένα πάντως τῶν πάντων, καὶ γὰρ τὸ γαλακτοτροφεῖν εἰ κοινὸν τῶν νομάδων, ὁμοίως καὶ κτηνοβρωτεῖν καὶ τρέφεσθαι ἐκ θήρας·	having devoted priests for their religion, whom they call Mantzedes; their nutritional habits are foreign to all, However, eating dairy is common to all nomads, likewise eating animals and subsisting on prey;
8	ἀλλὰ τὸ φύλον τοῦτο δε ταύτης τῆς	this tribe, which lives this way,
4	βιοτείας, πρὸς ταῦτ' δ' οὐδὲν ἀκάθαρτον οἶδ', οὐδὲ θνησιμαῖον οὐδὲ ὄψον δ'οὐδὲ ὀπτὸν, ταῦτ' οὐ μὴ χρησιμεῦον, γάλα καὶ αἷμα ἴσα τε, ἔωλόν τε καὶ ὄζον, ἀδιαφόρως κέχρηται καὶ πᾶν καὶ παντί ζώῳ. Μακρὰ δ' ἐκ τούτου κέμπροσθεν νέμεται κι ἄλλο ἔθνος	considers nothing as polluted, nothing that lives, nothing that can be touched or seen, goes to waste, Including milk and blood, however rotten and ill-scented something may be and everything and all animals are used equally. Far from them and more eastwards there is another tribe,
9	εἰς πάντα ἀπαράλλαχτον κι αὐτὸ τᾶν	identical in everything to the one
0	ῥηθέντος· κι αὐτὸ ὡς ὑποτάσσεται τοῖς Ρώσοις λόγον ἔχει, ἀλλ' αὐτεξούσιον κι αὐτὸ κι οὐδένα χρεῖαν ἔχει. Πῶς δ' ἄρ' ὑποταχθήσονται τὰ τοῖα λέγω ἔθνη,	mentioned above; it is considered subjugated to the Russians, but it is independent, as well, and self- sufficient. So, I wonder how these nations can be subjugated,

	ἄττα ἐκεῖσε φέρονται ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ νέφη; κι εἵπω καὶ πῶς δυνήσεται ὅστις κἂν ὑποτάξῃ	in those lands where they move as the clouds move in the sky? How can anyone conquer
9	τοὺς ἐν ὠκεανῷ ἰχθῦς, ὅταν στὰ βάθῃ	those that are like fish in the ocean's
6	πᾶσι;	depths?

The Map of Central Asia, Kalmyks

Καλμούκοι, ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἱμπερατορικοῦ καὶ μοναρχικοῦ σκήπτρου τῆς κραταιοτάτης ῥωσαϊκῆς αὐτοκρατορίας ὑποτασσόμενοι, ὧν τὸ ἔθνος πολυάνθρωπον, σκηνόβιον, πολεμικόν, πολύκτηνον, ὧν κτηνῶν τῷ κρέα, τῷ γάλακτι, καὶ τῇ τυχούσῃ θήρᾳ τρεφόμενον, καὶ ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν δερμάτων εἰς χρῆσιν ἱματίων ἱματιζόμενον. Θρησκεῖα δὲ τούτων, ὅλως ἡ εἰδωλολατρεῖα. ὁ δὲ ἄρχων τούτου κατὰ διαδοχὴν τὴν ἀρχὴν διαδέχεται ὄνομα δ' ἦν τούτῳ, ἐν τῇ κατ' ἐμὲ ἐκεῖ διατριβῇ, Αγιουκαχάν.	Kalmyks, subordinated to the imperial and monarchic rule of the almighty Russian empire, are a populous nation, living in tents, skilled in war, rich in cattle, eating meat, drinking milk, and the occasional prey, and dressed using their skins as garments. Their religion is entirely paganism. Its ruler inherits the rule through succession, and, during the time I stayed there, his name was Ayuka Khan.
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The nation of Kondosēdes, Voyages Part II / 258 – 263

Μετά δὲ τῶν προρρηθέντων δὲ νομάδων τῶν Κασάτζκων μακρὰ που δὲ ἐξ ἐαυτῶν οὐχὶ ὁμῶς πρὸς ἄρκτον,	After the aforementioned Kazakh nomads in distance from them, not northwards,
--	---

	ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐπεκτείνεται πρὸς τὰ ἑῷα τούτων	but to their east
258	κι ἄλλο ἔθνος νομαδικὸν εἶν' στὸ πεδῖον τοῦτο, εἰς πάντα ἀπαράλλακτον τῶν προρρηθὲν Καλμούκων, εἰς οὐδὲν διαφέροντας 'ς ὅσα κείνων καὶ τούτων· τὸ ὄνομα δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν Κονδόσηδες τοὺς κράζουν καὶ εἰς ὄψιν καὶ πρόσωπον Καλμοῦκοι ὁμοιάζουν. Ἀλλ' ὁ ἄρχων ὅμως αὐτῶν ἄρχει καὶ αὐθεντεύει	dwells another nomadic nation , very similar in everything as the aforementioned Kalmyks, with no difference between them and the former; they are called by the name Kondosēdes and their appearance and looks resemble those of Kalmyks. However, their ruler rules and commands
264	καὶ μ' ἓναν λόγο νὰ εἰπῶ εἰς αὐτοὺς βασιλεύει· ὀξέας δίδει προσταγὰς, εὐθύς πᾶσαι τελοῦνται, ὅποῖες κἄν καὶ τύχωσιν ἅμα ἀναπληροῦνται. Αὐτοὶ εἰς τοὺς πολέμους τοὺς ἀνδρείως πολεμοῦσι κι ἀφόβως κατὰ τῶν ἐχθρῶν ὡς θηρία ὀρμοῦσι.	to put it simply he reigns over them; his orders are harsh and all of them are executed immediately, regardless of what it is requested to be done. They wage war bravely, and they attack the enemy fearlessly, like beasts.

	Ἐξ αὐτῶν τῷ ποτὲ καιρῷ κή Κίνα ἐδουλώθη,	Once, they subjugated China too,
270	τὸ Κιτάϊον δηλαδή ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐσκλαβώθη· περί οὗ εἴπω σύντομα μικρὸν νὰ σαφηνίσω, κἔπειτα λόγου τὸν ρυθμὸν πάλιν νὰ ἀρχινίσω. Ἐν ἐκείνῳ γὰρ τῷ καιρῷ διχόνοια πεσοῦσα, κεῖς δύο βασιλίδες δὲ ἡ ἀρχὴ μερισθεῖσα, ἐμφύλιος ἐκ τούτου δὲ ὁ πόλεμος ἀνήφθη,	in other words “Kitai” (China) found itself subject to them; on that, I would like to make a short clarification, and then I will circle back to where I stopped. At that time people turned against each other, and power was divided between two kings, which triggered a civil war,
276	κεῖς δύο ἅπας ὁ λαὸς μέρη καὶ εμερίσθη. Ἐν τούτῳ δ’ εἰς βοήθειαν ὁ εἷς τῶν βασιλίδων τοὺς Κονδόσηδες αὐτουνοὺς ἐκάλεσ’ ὡς πλησίον· ἐξ ὧν ἓν σῶμα μέγιστον ἔχον ἀπείρου πλήθους ἔσω εὐθύς ἐγένετο τοῦ κεῖσε Μακροῦ Τείχους·	dividing the people into two different sides. Then, one of the two kings seeking for help, invited this people, Kondosēdes, as allies; of these, a large segment with numerous warriors, suddenly entered inside the Great Wall;

	καὶ ὥρμησεν ὡς βίαιος ποταμὸς καὶ μεγάλος,	it diffused like a long violent river,
282	τοὺς ἐναντίους ἔφθειρεν ὡς κατακλυσμὸς ἄλλος.	killing the enemies like a flood.
	Ἔπειτα δὲ ἀπέκτεινε κι αὐτὸν τὸν βασιλίδην,	Next, they killed none other than the king himself,
	ὁ δὲ τούτων ὁ στρατηγὸς βασιλέας ἐγέννη·	and this is how their own warlord became king;
	παρ' οὗ κατὰ διαδοχὴν τὸ κράτος διαμένει	thanks to this, through succession, his line remained in power
	εἰς το Κιτάϊ μέχρι νῦν, κέξ αὐτοῦ βασιλεύει.	and, ever since until now, China, has been reigned by them.
	Τὰ μὲν τῆς Κίνας οὖν αὐτὰ ἅ μέχρι τοῦδ' ἐάσω,	These issues concern China and I will not go further,
	κεῖς τοὺς νομάδες Κόνδοσους αὐθις ἐπανακάμψω.	so I return immediately to the Kondosēdes nomads.
288	Παρ' αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς Κόνδοσοις εἶν' κι αὐτός ὃν θρυλοῦσιν,	Close to these Kondosēdes, there is also this legendary man,
	ὃν καὶ λατρεύουσιν αὐτοὶ κεῦλαβῶς προσκυνοῦσι,	whom they worship and before whom they bow down,
	λέγω δ' ὁ Δαλάϊ Λαμᾶς, ὡς αὐτοὶ τὸν καλοῦσι,	I am referring to Dalai Lama, as they call him,
	περὶ οὗ καὶ πολλὰ μωρὰ αὐτ' ὅλοι φλυαροῦσι.	for whom they all jibber-jabber nonsense.

	Αὐτὸς δ' εἶπω τρόπον τινὰ ἔχει ὡς αὐθεντίαν	In a way he has become a master
294	καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἴδιαν στήν εἰδωλολατρίαν· τάττει καὶ διατάττει γὰρ, ἀνάγει καὶ κατάγει, σώζει, κολάζ' ὃν βούλεται, καὶ τινὰν δὲν ρωτάει· καὶ γὰρ οἱ τούτου λατρευταὶ ἐς τοσοῦτον μωραίνουν, τὸν Δαλάϊ Λαμᾶ αὐτὸν ποτὲ δὲν τὸν πεθαίνουν. Λέσι δὲ καὶ μωραίνουσι πῶς αὐτὸς, σὰν γηράση, δὲν θνήσκει ὥσπερ ἄνθρωπος ἀλλὰ πάλιν νεάζει· περὶ αὐτοῦ κι ἄλλα πολλὰ λέσι μεστὰ ἀνοίας μωρίας καὶ πολυειδοῦς ἀπάσης φλυαρίας. Ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ δὲ ὥσπερ δοκεῖ, ὡς δὲ καὶ ἐνωτίσθην ἐκ τινων τούτων νουνεχῶν, αὐτὸ ἐγὼ	and he holds a power over idolatry; he orders and commands as he likes, promotes or demotes according to his taste, forgives or punishes whomever he likes, without being held accountable; in fact his followers go dumb to such an extent, that they believe Dalai Lama never dies. So, they foolishly claim that when he gets old he does not die like a mortal but he is reborn young; they say a lot of foolish things about him, and everything is full of nonsense and foolishness, with all kinds of jibber- jabber. However, I believe, as I have heard by some of those people who were

	ἐπέισθην	reasonable -therefore I was convinced -
	ὥς ὅτι ὁ Δαλάϊ Λαμᾶς φατρίαν ποίαν ἔχει	that the Dalai Lama has a faction of some sort
306	ὕπουργοῦσαν, συμπράττουσαν σὰ τῆς θρησκείας ἔθῃ·	which work for him and participates in religious ceremonies;
	οἱ δ' αὐτῆς ὀνομάζονται οἱ μὲν πρῶτοι λαμᾶδες,	those in the highest rank of the hierarchy are called Lama,
	οἱ δεύτεροι μαντζῆδες δέ, ἅπαντες λατρευτάδες·	those under them are called Mantzēdes and all of them are believers;
	αὕτη δ' ἡ φατρία αὐτὸν ὅλως τὸν ἐκθειάζει,	This faction completely glorifies him
	κι αὐτὸς δ' ὅστις κατὰ καιρὸν αὐτὴν τὴν ἐδοξάζει·	and he reciprocates from time to time;
	κι οὕτω χεὶρ χεῖρα νίπτουσα, τὸ τοῦ λόγου εἶπεῖν με,	thus, one hand washes the other, as the saying goes
	σκηνὴν τοιούτην παίζουσι' ς ἐκείνους ποῦ πλανοῦνται.	and in this way they deceive the naïve.
312	Εἵπω κι αὐτ', ἀναγνώστα μου, καὶ τοῦτο γίνωσκέ το,	I will, moreover, say, my dear reader, the following for you to know,
	κι ὡς χρήσιμον δὲ καὶ αὐτὸ καλὰ ἀνάγνωσέ το,	and read carefully for it is useful,
	ὥς ὅλοι οἱ τοῦ τάγματος κι ὕπουργοὶ τῆς θρησκείας	everyone in this order and those guiding this religion,
	ταύτης λέγω τῆς μιᾶς, τῆς	I am talking about this filthy idolatry,

	είδωλολατρείας,	
	ἅπαντες ἄγαμοι τελοῦν τῷ σωφροσύνης λόγῳ,	they all remain celibate so that they remain chaste,
318	τὰ δ' ἐν κρυφῇ πάντα αὐτῶν εἴν'σὺν τῷ διαβόλῳ.	while behind closed doors their actions are devilish.

The nation of Zophedes, *Voyages* part II/321-330

	Τῶν Κόνδοσῆδων που μακρὰ κατ' ἀνατολὰς τούτων ἔθνος ἔτι νομαδικὸν εἴν'σὺν πεδίον τοῦτο· λέγεται φύλον τοῦ Ἀζοφ, ἔχον ἀπαράλλακτως	In a place far away to the east of Kondosēdes once again a nomadic nation lies in this plain; it is called tribe of Azoph, no difference
32	εἰς ἅπαντα τοῖς Κόνδοσοις, ἔχει κι	do they have from Kondosēdes, the
4	αὐτὸ ὡσαύτως· κι αὐτοὶ δὲ οἱ Ζόφηδες λέσι καὶ φλυαροῦσι, καὶ τὸ ἔθνος τὸ ἑαυτῶν κι αὐτοὶ τὸ ἀξιοῦσι, λέγοντες τῷ ποτὲ καιρῷ κι αὐτοὶ νὰ εὐμοιροῦσαν Δαλαῖ Λαμᾶ πῶς κι αὐτοὶ εἶχαν καὶ προσκυνοῦσαν. Παρ'αὐτοῖς δε τοῖς Ζόφηδαις φύεται πᾶν βεβαίως	same applies to them; for they too, Zophēdes, say and go on and on, taking pride in their nation, saying that in the past they were blessed having Dalai Lama too and they worshipped him. Also it is known that close to Zophēdes grows
33	τὸ ῥεοβάρβαρόν φημι, τῶν	rhubarb, the height of medicines.
0	φαρμάκων τὸ κλέος.	

Map of Central Asia, Zophedes

Ζοφχάν, ἀρχηγὸς ἔθνους παρομοίου τοῦ Κόνδοσι, ὧν ο βίος καὶ τῶν ἐν	Zophkhan, leader of a nation similar to Kondosēdes, they live in tents and lead
---	--

σκηναῖς περιφέρεται. Πρὸς οἷς φύεται καὶ τὸ ῥεοβάρβαρον, καὶ παραυτοῖς Δαλαῖλαμάς γεννηθῆναι, καὶ τοὶ πρὸ τούτου ἑτεραπεύοντο.	a nomadic life. Rhubarb grows in their region and close to them Dalai Lama has been born, for this they say incredible things.
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Karakalpaks, Voyages II / 143 - 154

14 4	Μετὰ δὲ ἃ προείρηκα τὰ ἔθνη τῶν Καλμούκων, μακρὰ που δὲ ἐξ ἑαυτῶν κατ' ἀνατολὰς τούτων, ἔθνος κι ἄλλο νομαδικὸν πολυάνθρωπον λίαν, πολεμικὸν κι ἀρπακτικὸν, μεστὸν ὅλον ληστείαν, γένος μὲν πάντως σκυθικὸν ὃ τούτ' ὀνομασία, τὸ τῶν Καρακαλπάκηδων ἔχει ἐπωνυμία.	After everything I said about the Kalmyk nations, in a place far away from them, to their east, [lies] another nomadic quite populous nation, warlike and marauding, all too familiar with banditry, stemming from the race known as Scythian, bearing the name Karakalpaks.
15 0	Θρησκεῖαν δ' οἶδεν ἀμυδρῶς, καὶ οὐδὲν ἄλλο τούτης εἰ μὴ ὡς ὁ Μωάμεθ εἶν' ἐκεῖνος ὁ προφήτης· κέκ γένους τοῦ ἰδίου τε τὸ πλῆθος ὄν ἐκλέξη οὐχὶ ὅμως ἐκ τῶν ἀπλῶν, ἀλλ' οὕς μιρζᾶδες λέσι, ἐκ τούτων ὅστις ἐκλεχθῇ τοῦτος κήγεμονεύει, κεῖς ὅλους τούτους αὐτουνοὺς σχεδὸν καὶ βασιλεύει.	Little do they know about religion, [they believe in] none other than the one whose prophet is Muhammad; from this tribe, someone is elected by the people not among the common people, but among those called Mirza, whoever is voted among them, he rules, he almost reigns over this nation.

Kazakhs, Voyages II / 155 - 166

Line	Original	Translation
156	<p>Κέκ τούτου δὲ παρέμπροσθεν κούχ οὕτω μακρὰ τούτου, κι ἄλλο τε ἔθνος νέμεται ἀπαράλλακτον τούτου, τὰ ἔθνους ἔχον ὅμοια καὶ γλώττης καὶ θρησκείας, ὁμοίως καὶ τῆς ἐκλογῆς καὶ τῆς ἡγεμονίας· ὃ γένος ὀνομάζεται γένος τὸ τῶν Κασάτζκων καὶ πάντ' ἔχει ὁμόνοιαν μὲ τῶν Καρακαλπάκων. Τὰ δύο ἔθνη ταῦτα δὲ ἀπλῶς πολλοὶ τὰ κράζουσιν· τῶν Κιργίζων μ' ἔν ὄνομα κοινῶς τὰ ὀνομάζουν. Πάντως τὰ ἔθνη δέ αὐτὰ πρέπει τις παρεικάσαι Ιαξάρτων καὶ Τόχαρων καὶ Σάκων ὀνομάσαι· καὶ γὰρ οὐ περιφέρονται μακρὰ ἐκ τῆς θαλάττης ἐκείνης τῆς Ἀραλικῆς, ἔνθα κι ὁ Ἰαξάρτης·</p>	<p>To the east of this nation and nearby, another nation dwells, identical to the aforementioned one, they share the same language and religion, same procedure or electing the ruler, it is the nation of Kazakhs which is always on peaceful terms with the Karakalpaks. Many consider these two nations as one; they call them jointly as Kyrgyz. It would be wise to associate these nations the Jaxartes, Tokhars, and Saka; because they do not move far away from that sea Called the Aral, where Jaxartes [flows] too;</p>

Kazakhs, Map of Central Asia

Καζάκοι, ἔθνος καὐτὸ τῆς μωχαμεθικῆς δόξης, παρόμοιον τὸ τοῖς Καρακαλπάκοις, καὶ φίλοι αὐτοῖς καὶ συμβοηθοὶ ἐν ταῖς στρατιαῖς αὐτῶν, ἀλλ' ὅμως πολλὰ πολυανθρωπότερον, καὶ μέχρι τοῦδε πολεμικώτερον, ὥς καὶ τὸ θῆλυ τούτων ἐν καιρῷ χρείας παρατάττεσθαι. ὁ δὲν ὡς ἄρρεν, καθοπλισμένον εἰς πόλεμον.	Kazakhs, another nation which follows Muslim faith, similar to the Karakalpaks, with whom they are on friendly terms, and provide military support to each other. However, Kazaks are far more populous, and more prone to war until now, they even recruit women if needed, who go to war armed just like men.
ἐξ ὧν ἶδον ἐν τῷ τῆς Μπουχαρίας πολέμῳ (ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἐντῇ Μπουχαρία τυχόντος μου) γυναῖκας δύο, ἃς ἐν τῇ πληγῇ τοῦ πολέμου ἔνοπλας καὐτὰς μετὰ καὶ ἄλλων πολεμίων ἐζώγρησαν, καὶ ἐντῇ πόλει φέροντες ταῦτας (πὸ ῥῶ τοῦ συμπαθοῦς) ἀνηλεῶς καὶ ἀσπλάχνως ἀπέκτειναν.	During the war in Bukhara (I happened to be there), I saw two of those armed women, during the turmoil of war, who were captured amid other warriors, and were brought in the city (with no compassion) they were killed ruthlessly and mercilessly.

Turkmens, *Voyages II* / 107 - 138

10	Πρὸς δὲ τὸν νότον εἰ καὶ ἐν φύλῳ νέμεται μόνον,	To the south a nation dwells on its own,
8	ἀλλ' εἰς φυλαρχίας πολλὰς εἶναι διηρημένον·	Divided, nonetheless, in many tribes;
	τοῦτ' αὐτὸ τῶν Τουρκμένηδων, Τουρκμένους ὅπου κράζουν,	it is of the Turkmens, as they are called,
	οἵτινες τὴν μωάμεθον δόξαν πάντες δοξάζουν·	they all follow the Muslim faith;

	αὐτοὶ, κατὰ τοὺς παλαιοὺς τοὺς ἱστορικοὺς λέγω,	according to the old historians, I say, they
	οἱ Οὕννοι εἶναι βέβαια, καθὼς κάγὼ τὸ θέλω·	are certainly the Huns, to which I agree;
	φῦλον πάνυ πολεμικὸν, τῇ ἱππικῇ δεινὸν τε,	an extremely warlike tribe, remarkable in horse riding,
11 4	ἐν δίψῃ, πείνῃ, καύσονι, πολλὰ καρτερικόν τε.	able to withstand thirst, hunger, and heat.
	Ἐν οἷς δὲ τόποις νέμεται εἶπω καθαρωτέρως,	I will describe clearly where they live,
	ὅπως ὁ ἀναγνώστης μου γνώσῃ εὐληπτοτέρως.	so that the reader understands better.
	Ἐκ θαλάττης τῆς Κάσπιας καὶ δι' ἄκρων Περσίας,	From the Caspian Sea to the borders of Persia,
	καὶ ταύτης τοῦ παρέμπροσθεν κι οὐ μακρὰ τῆς Ἰνδίας	to the east, not far from India,
	ἄμμος μέγας ἐκτείνεται, κατὰ τόπους, οὗ εὖρος	a large dessert is spread, whose width
12 0	ἄλλοῦ μὲν μηνιαῖον εἶν', ἄλλοῦ δ' ὀλιγωτέρως·	would take a month to cross, or less in other places;
	τὰ δ' αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀριστεροῖς, λέγω τὰ πρὸς βορέαν	To its left, that is towards the north,
	τὸ πεδῖον ὃ ἱστορῶ εἶν' κεῖν' αὐτὸ τὸ μέγα,	lies that vast plain I am talking about ,

	<p>κι ἀκολουθῶς κατὰ σειρὰν καὶ Χίβας βασιλεία,</p> <p>καὶ ἀνωτέρω ἐξ αὐτῆς εἶν'καὶ ἡ Βουχαρία.</p> <p>Ταῦτα δ'οὖν τὰ ἐν δεξιοῖς κι ἀριστεροῖς τῆς ἄμμου,</p>	<p>followed by the kingdom of Khiva,</p> <p>and further north is Bukhara.</p> <p>These are located to the right and left of the sand,</p>
12 6	<p>εἶπω δὲ καὶ τὰ καθεξῆς περὶ τῆς αὐτῆς ψάμμου·</p> <p>ἐν τούτῃ οὖν τῇ ἄμμῳ δ'οὖν εἶναι διεσπαρμένον</p> <p>τὸ φύλον τῶν Τουρκμένηδων, καὶ εἶναι μερισμένον</p> <p>εἰς φυλαρχίας μὲν πολλὰς κατὰ φυλὰς καὶ γένη,</p> <p>κεῖς μέρη ἃ ἀρμόδια εἶναι κατοικημένοι·</p> <p>ὧν ὁ βίος οὐκ ἄλλος εἶν'εἰ μὴ ἐκ τῆς ληστείας,</p>	<p>But let's continue further on this desert;</p> <p>scattered around this desert is</p> <p>the nation of Turkmens, and it is divided</p> <p>into many polities according to tribes and clans,</p> <p>and they reside in appropriate places;</p> <p>they subsist solely on banditry,</p>
13 2	<p>καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἀρπαγῆς ὁμοῦ, ποτὲ τε κέκ τῆς θήρας.</p> <p>Πότε μὲν τὰ ἐκ δεξιῶν τὰ ἄκρα τῆς Περσίδος</p> <p>ληΐζοντας ἀναφανδὸν, πότε δὲ καὶ κρυφίως·</p>	<p>looting, and occasionally hunting.</p> <p>On their right stretch the borders of Persia</p> <p>they raid continuously, sometimes by stealth;</p>

	ὡσαύτως κέξ ἀριστερῶν τὰ ἄκρα τῆς Περσίδος	similarly, they raid the western borders of Persia
	ὁμοίως τε ληϊζονται καὶ τὰ τῆς Βουχαρίας·	as well as those of Bukhara;
	ἐξ ὧν πολλοὺς ὁ σάχ Ναδὶρ μ' ἴδιαν πληρωμὴν του	Shah Nader paid himself many Turkmens
13 8	εἰς δούλευσίν του ἔλαβε κεῖς χρῆσιν ἐδικήν του.	to work for him and act on his orders.

Bashkirs, *Voyages II* / 103-106

Πρὸς μὲν βορρᾶν τὸ ἔθνος εἶν' ὃ λέγεται Μπασκίρων,	A nation called Bashkirs lies to the north [of Volga],
δόξης μὲν μωαμεθικῆς, καὶ σκυθικὸν εἶν' φύλον,	practices Muslim religion, and belongs to the Scythian tribe,
οὗ μέρος μὲν νομαδικὸν, μέρος κοίκούμενον τε,	part of them is nomadic and part of them is sedentary,
καὶ ὡς ὃν ζᾷκρα τῆς Ῥωσσιᾶς εἶν' καὶ ὑπήκοόν τε.	it is located at the edges of the Russian empire as a subject nation.